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INTRODUCTION

Science is the knowledge of the existing, which systematically totally covers a sector of issues. Science is one and its purpose is the understanding of all phenomena. Due to human's incapability of mental controling the whole of universal rules, science is divided to partial ''sciences'' and each one covers its objective field.

The science of tourism can be divided in two parts. The sciences of understanding the tourism phenomenon and the sciences of the enterprises of hospitality and their management.

Dealing with sciences leads to complete studies whose purpose is the understanding of the reality. These studies are set to be published in refereed scientific journals. Their publication is judjed for being original, complete and correct, by members of the academic community. Then, these publications are considered as valid and can be used by other researchers for the spread of knowledge.

Aim of the magazine is the spread of knowledge related to the scientific fields of tourism. In Tourism Issues there are being published original articles and obligatorily new researches. The writing language can be Greek , English , French or German. The scripts will be evaluated by three - membered scientific committee whose members have deep knowledge of the specific fields.

Laloumis Dimitris

WRITING GUIDELINES

In "Tourism Issues" can be published original articles and research studies dealing with tourism topics. The articles and the studies should have never been published before.

Every scientific paper should not exceed a maximum of 8000 words and should be sent in electronic form at info@dratte.gr.

The paper can be written in Greek, English, French or German.

Papers should be typewritten in black, double-spaced on A4 or US letter sized white paper and printed on one side of the paper only, with 1 ½ inch margins on all four sides, using 10 pts Arial characters. Pages should be numbered consecutively.

The first page of the paper should include in the following order: paper title, author's name and surname, affiliation, postal address, telephone and fax numbers, email address, acknowledgements. In the case of co-authors, their full details should also appear (all correspondence will be sent to the first named author). Also include an abstract of 200-250 words, and up to five keywords.

The second page should contain the title of the paper, an abstract of 200-250 words, and up to five keywords. Do *not* include the author(s) details in this page.

Subsequent pages: main body of text; list of references; appendices; endnotes (endnotes should be kept to a minimum).

Every paper should be accompanied by a 180-word abstract. The text of the abstract is not allowed to be part of the paper. Also, the author should propose 4 key words associated with the main fields dealt with in the paper. The aforementioned (name, title, abstract and key words) should be given in English and Greek, as well as in the language of composition in case this is French or German.

Tables, figures and illustrations should be referred to and included in the text, in gray tint. Each table, figure and illustration should be numbered consecutively (in Arabic numbers) and titled. Tables, figures and illustrations should not exceed one page and should be kept to a minimum.

The text should be organized under appropriate section headings. Section headings should be marked as follows: primary headings should be typed in upper case and bold (e.g. **INTRODUCTION**); subsection headings should be in upper and lower case and bold (e.g. **Tourism Planning**).

Quotations should be taken accurately from the original source. Alterations to quotations should be noted. Quotation marks (“ ”) should be used to denote direct quotes. Inverted commas (‘ ’) are to be used to denote a quote within a quotation.

Papers should be supported by references. These should be set out according to the standard Harvard style as follows. In the text references should be cited by the author’s name and year of publication in brackets – for example (Miller, 2000; Tribe, 2000, 2001), or ‘… as noted by Miller (2000)’. Where there are two or more references to one author for the same year, the following form should be used (Smith, 1999a) or (Smith, 1999b). Where references include two authors the form (Clarke & Little, 1996) should be used. Where references include three or more authors the form (Riley *et al.*, 1996) should be used. The reference list, placed towards the end of the manuscript, must be typed in alphabetical order of authors. The specific format is:

- *For papers in journals:* Blangy S. & Nielson T. (1995) Ecotourism and minimum impact policy, *Annals of Tourism Research* 20(2), 357-360.
- *For books and monographs:* Inskeep E. (1991) *Tourism Planning: An Integrated and Sustainable Development Approach*, London: John Wiley & Sons.
- *For chapters in edited books:* Hall C.L. & Jenkins J.M. (1998) The policy dimensions of rural tourism and recreation. In R. Butler, C.M. Hall & J. Jenkins (Eds.) *Tourism and Recreation in Rural Areas*, London: John Wiley & Sons, 19-42.
- *For reports:* Hovland N.P. (1989) *Local Economic Impact for Travelling Business: Examples from the Municipality of Risoer*, report no. 24, Telemark Research Institute, Boe.

Every paper will be examined by a three-member scientific committee. The committee’s members cover cognitive fields relevant to the papers’ topics and receive the papers with the author’s/s’ name undisclosed. The judging process will be completed with author’s anonymity throughout. The judges will propose to the editorial committee the acceptance or the rejection of a paper to be published or the possibility of publishing an article after corrections suggested by the judging committee.

After the papers’ judgement, the authors will be notified, either the judgement has been positive or not. The approved papers will be published according to priority of chronological order.

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A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH OF THE GREEK MANAGEMENT

Charalampos Giousmpasoglou

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ABSTRACT

The devastating effects of globalisation during the 1990s have had a great impact in the way academics and practitioners viewed management all over the world. The emergence of culture and national context as critical factors in the exercise of management, signposted a new dynamic movement that challenged the '*good old fashioned western*' (mostly American) management practices and their '*universal*' applicability. Researchers have shifted their focus from the predictable Anglo-Saxon corporate managerial environment to more '*exotic*' and unknown destinations such as the Asian and Middle East contexts. In addition a great effort is conducted within the limits of the E.U. to understand the different national management contexts, despite the fact that most of them are based in the U.S. model. Arguably one of the most difficult and challenging cases under examination is Greece. The country was heavily exposed to western management practices during the post-WWII years and until the late 1970s there was no indication that management practices were differentiated than those imposed by American multinational companies. Since the early 1980s though, something has radically changed; the entry of Greece in the E.U. and the enormous efforts of both the public and the private sector to catch up with the rest of Europe's '*developed*' countries have surfaced some unique socio-cultural characteristics that seem to affect the exercise of management in this country. Some of these characteristics include the values of '*filotimo*', trust and humanism; the high context and polychronic culture; high uncertainty avoidance; and in-group collectivism. This paper aims to explore the existing literature on the Greek cultural context in relation to management practices, and identify if there is convergence or divergence with the rest E.U. counties.

Keywords: Management, National Culture, Greece

INTRODUCTION

It is arguable that the notion of culture constitutes the most elusive and yet tantalising concept for both management theorists and practitioners. The complexity of the concept and the ongoing debate on what is culture and how it affects management in different contexts is not yet clarified by researchers. Especially when research focuses in the Greek context it becomes extremely difficult to conclude the role of culture in relation to managerial work because there are only a very limited number of studies in this field. The discussion below is an effort to provide the reader with a general overview of the socio-cultural context that Greek managers operate in. It is thus necessary,

to highlight some important national characteristics, norms and behaviours which will provide a better understanding of the Greek management context.

1. CULTURE IN NATIONAL AND ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

The concept of national culture has figured as an explanation for management differences across nations (Hofstede, 1983; Mwaura *et al*., 1998). Literature reveals between one hundred fifty to two hundred identifiably distinct definitions of culture. Hofstede (1980) defines culture as *'collective mental programming'*, and Trompenaars (1993) as the *'way in which peoples solve the fundamental life problems'* that face all societies. In addition, national culture is defined by Fukuyama (1995) as '*inherited habit*'. The vast majority of definitions on culture (i.e. Schwartz & Davis, 1981; Lawrence & Lorsch, 1986; Deal & Kennedy, 1982) lead to the conclusion that culture is a set of beliefs and values shared by the people in an organisation/society/country that exerts a powerful influence on people's behaviour, because it operates without being talked about. Thomas (2008, p.35) argues that the various definitions of national culture can be misleading; that is multiple cultures can exist within national borders (i.e. U.S.A.), and the same national group can span many nations (i.e. Greeks).

Furthermore literature suggests (Hofstede, 1980, 1991; Hapmden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1994) that national culture interpretation and adaptation are a prerequisite to the comparative understanding of national management practice. They also suggest that where a nation has a strong and distinctive culture this carries over into the nation's organisations – the most cited examples being *Japanese, German and United States'* organisations - such organisations benefiting from prevailing characteristics within the national culture supportive of enterprise. On the other hand, attempts to establish a common corporate culture in an international or multi-national firm can be undermined by the strength of national cultures and research points to the fact that the cultures of individual countries are both more stable and more powerful than those of individual organisations (Newman & Nollen, 1996).

Hofstede (1980, 1991) suggests that not only organisations are culture bound but also theories about organisations are equally culture bound. This practically means that what works well in one country may be entirely inappropriate in another. Hapmden-Turner and Trompenaars (1994, p.17) emphasise the need to view international management from multiple perspectives, in the face of cultural diversity. Morden (1995) suggests that international managers and multinational companies may need to take a '*best fit*' or '*contingency*' approach to any issues related with the management function. The style of management must be appropriate to the prevailing local contingencies. It can be argued that this model has influenced multinational companies operating in Greece which have adopted a mix of their best practices and standard procedures with local management practices (Myloni *et al*, 2004).

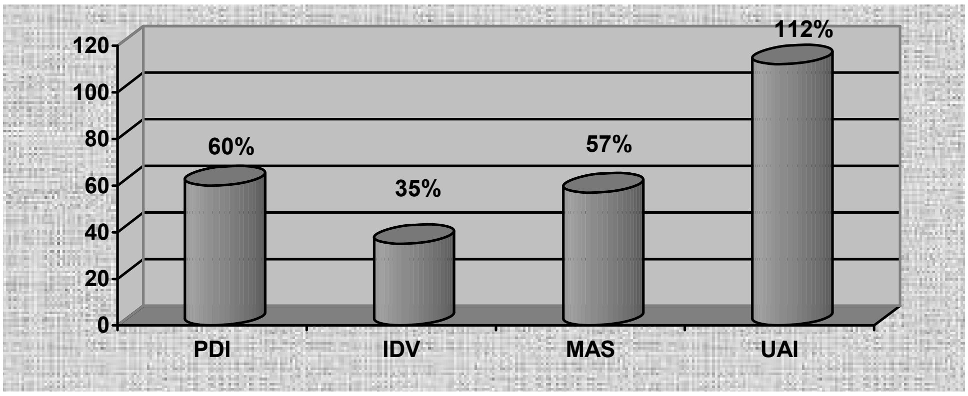
2. A CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF THE GREEK MANAGEMENT

Early research concerning the management of Greek organisations has suggested that management during the 1980s was underdeveloped in relation to other national E.U. partners (EEDE, 1986). From the few empirical studies that refer to the Greek management culture, it is not easy to classify Greece as a member of any one of the clusters of countries suggested by Hofstede (1980, 1991). The literature provides however some interesting data relating to the management function in Greek context.

2.1. Hofstede and Greece

A major research programme was established by Hofstede in the 1970s (reported in *Culture's Consequences,* 1980) to scientifically and systematically study cultural differences. In Hofstede's study data was collected from all employees of the IBM Corporation across thirty eight countries (the sample size being *circa* one hundred twenty thousand). The aim of Hofstede's (1980) work was to provide an analytical framework for enabling people management professionals to understand and explain the behaviour of managers and employees from different cultural backgrounds.

Figure 1: Greece scores in Hofstrede's Cultural Dimensions



Source: http://www.geert-hofstede.com

Hofstede (1980) found that, of the fifty-three countries included in his sample, Greece (Figure 1) is characterised by the highest *'uncertainty avoidance'* index (UAI), as well as by a moderate to high masculine culture (MAS). On the basis of these two characteristics, he suggested that the need for security and status as a result of wealth is especially important to Greeks. Regarding the leadership styles by which people would like to be managed, Hofstede (*ibid.*) showed that the consultative style is greatly preferred over other styles in Greece (i.e., 70% of respondents preferred the consultative style, 18% the participative, 12% the persuasive, and 0% the autocratic). This survey reflected the will of people for change in a time that management was perceived as authoritative and autocratic function in a rather conservative and depressed society (democracy was restored in 1974 after a seven-year military junta). Compared with the other thirty seven countries in Hofstede's sample, Greece gave the highest preference percentage to the consultative style (the average was 49%), while the participative style accounted for a considerably lower percentage than the average (28%).

Since Hofstede's research in the late 1970s, Greek managers have significantly adapted their autocratic and paternalistic national management style, conditioned by their national culture, to the international corporate culture studied abroad (Makridakis *et al.*, 1997). In addition, the societal values and the way that companies are structured and operate have made many steps towards convergence with the rest of the E.U. despite the significant cultural differences (Myloni *et al.*, 2004).

Hofstede's cultural model has risen significant criticisms by a number of scholars over the years: his work has been criticised for being vague, contradictory and for lacking basic theory (Cray & Mallory, 1998; Baskerville, 2003); the national culture model being far too static and homogenous (Tayeb, 2001; Kwek, 2003); its lack of relevance for discussing intercultural interactions (Bartholomew and Adler, 1996; Holden, 2002); its functionalist ambition of measuring largely unquantifiable phenomena (Baskerville, 2003); its inappropriate and time-worn data which were collected in only one organisation worldwide (Baskerville, 2003); or the failure to mitigate ethnocentrism and parochialism (Adler, 1997). Indeed, we can argue that it is not possible to come to safe conclusions about the national management style characteristics, only from the responses of a few employees working for an American multinational company (IBM), in a country with deeply rooted anti-Americanism (Christou, 2006).

2.2. The notion of national identity and patriotism

A distinctive characteristic of the Greek culture is the strong national identity. As a social phenomenon it involves feeling proud to be the national of a particular country, appreciating the nation's problems and participating in problem solving, believing the country is fulfilling its goals, taking personal pride and joy in achievements, introducing oneself openly as a national, and encouraging friends and close acquaintances to see one's country in a positive light (Karkatsoulis & Michalopoulos, 2005). Any individual might not embrace all attributes of national identity because of social dynamics and personality elements. How strong or weak one is in terms of national consciousness and identity depends on influence systems (positive or negative) projected and propagated by the nation and its people. Metaphorically speaking, a shared national identity can be seen as providing the social *'glue that holds a nation together'* (Smith & Jarkko, 1998); in these terms nationality can become a basis of mutual obligation and social solidarity. The notion of national identity has serious implications in managerial behaviour in Greece; managers may link the prosperity and competitiveness of their company with the country's image and position in global competition. On the other hand, negative implications such as the emergence of ethnocentrism are likely to occur; this is a universal tendency resulting from social categorisation that has broad implications (Thomas, 2008). The most dangerous effects of ethnocentrism are in-group bias and prejudice, meaning that managers will consistently discriminate in favour of the (ethnic) group they belong (Triandis, 1994).

2.3. The Value of '*Filotimo*', Trust and Humanism

Greek people believe that the organisation they belong to has a great influence on their well-being and expect the organisation to look after them as a family (Kessapidou & Varsakelis, 2002). Most employees expect that when they enter into an organisation they are likely to spend the rest of their working lives there. This is a common characteristic in collectivist societies as China and Japan. The working culture of Greeks is based on a sense of honour, dignity, loyalty and a sense of duty what is referred in the modern Greek language as the value of '*filotimo*', for which there is no corresponding word in English.

As early as in the late 1960s Triandis *et al.* (1968) suggested that two central attributes of the Greek national character are extreme competitiveness and an unusual response to people in authority. Within the '*in-group*' there is warm acceptance of people with authority, and behaviour is cooperative and given to self-sacrifice (the value of *philotimo*). By contrast, there is a cold rejection of out-group authorities, and behaviour toward out-group people is suspicious, hostile, and extremely competitive (Georgas, 1993). Thus, Greek '*anti-authoritarianism*' is a by-product of the distinction between in-group and out-group (Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Moreover, the value of '*filotimo*' appears similar to the concept of '*face*' as appeared in the Chinese and other Asian cultures. Face is a person's dignity, self respect, status and prestige. According to Ho (1976), an organisation member tries *'not to loose face'*; face is lost when the individual, either through his/her action or that of people closely related to him/her, fails to meet essential requirements associated with his/her position. This characteristic benefits the organisations by having a high committed workforce without the need to create employee loyalty and retention schemes. In addition, following Triandis *et al.* (1968) argument which later verified by Earley (1993), Greek employees perform better while working in an in-group rather than in an out-group context or working alone.

Therefore, their '*moral*' involvement expressed as the value of *'filotimo'* provides reasons for the members to comply with the organisation's requirements and meet the expectation of their colleagues or in a broader sense any member who belongs to the in-group.

Fukuyama's (1995) analysis of Trust identifies and compares low and high trust societies. He suggests that in family oriented societies like in Greece, there are strong families with weak bonds of trust among people unrelated to one another. These societies are dominated from family owned and family managed business - in the case of Greece more than 97% (ICAP, 2007). In this type of business it is observed a strong preference for authority that is centralised, hierarchical and formally or legally defined. Disputes between individuals of the same status are difficult to resolve without reference to a higher and centralised form of authority. In general, Fukuyama (*ibid.*) suggests a correlation between hierarchy and the absence of trust that characterises low-trust societies. Hierarchies are necessary because not all people within a community can be relied upon to live by tacit ethical rules alone. They must ultimately be coerced by explicit rules and sanctions in the event that they do not comfort / comply with these rules.

In the same context but from a different perspective, Lessem & Neubauer (1994) studied the impact of national culture in European management systems. They categorise this impact under four inter- related criteria. The first two refer to the tension between pragmatism and idealism/ wholism that characterises European approaches to the theory and practice of management. The Anglo- Saxons and the Dutch tend to take a more pragmatic line towards management issues than their more idealistic or wholistic German counter -parts. Then follows the tension between a rationalist approach to dealing with management issues, as for instance taken by the French; and the humanist (or people-oriented) approach that characterises the family companies in southern Europe (Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece).

Humanism is defined by Webster's Dictionary as '*pertaining to the social life or collective relations of man kind; devoted to realising the fullness of human being; a philosophy that asserts the essential dignity and worth of man*'. Humanism is associated in particular with Italy. It is also a feature of Spain, Greece, and Ireland. Humanism puts a strong emphasis on the family group and the community which creates a sense of personal obligation and duty (see also the value of '*filotimo*'). The society overall is characterised by opportunism, change, flexibility and adaptability. Entrepreneurship and business are based on family, community, or socio-economic networks. The management style in this case is personalised and '*convivial*'. Humanism in business is developed by the family patriarch or matriarch; or by the *impannatore*, defined by Lessem and Neubauer as '*designer,* *responsible for shaping and responding to fashion, as well as for organising production, also urging firms to experiment with materials and processes*' (1994, pp.214-215). According to Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars (1994) a humanistic approach to management is characterised by:

- The management of communities of individuals (being both individualistic and communitarian).
- A tendency to personal equality within the hierarchy of the family, the community, or the socio-economic network. Each person has his or her place, duties, obligations, and rights within that context. Some people may also believe that what ever *Fate* has decreed the individual must accept.
- Particularism: it is the manager's job to deal with exceptions and individual cases as they arise. The universalistic application of rules may be perceived as being synonymous with bureaucratic control by the state, and with corruption by officials.
- Outer-directedness and opportunism.
- The perception of time as short term sequence within longer term historical patterns or synchrony.

The above three values (*Filotimo*, *Trust* and *Humanism*) that are met in the Greek management context, provide a strong indication for the existence of a different work context between Greek managers' and their European counter-parts.

2.4. The Greek High Context and Polychronic culture

Greek managers are also influenced from the country's high context culture (Figure 2). Context is defined here in terms of how individuals and their society seek information (Hall & Hall, 1990). People from high context cultures obtain information from personal information networks. Before such people make a decision, or arrange a deal they have become well informed about the facts associated with it. They have discussed the matter with friends, colleagues or even family members. They will have asked questions and listen to rumours or gossip. On the other hand, people from low context cultures seek information about decisions and deals from a research database whilst they would also listen to the views of colleagues or relatives (Morden, 1999).

In relation with time, Greek managers tend to do many things at once, often in an unplanned or opportunistic sequence. They may not be interested in time schedules or concepts of punctuality. They consider that the reality of events and opportunities is more important than adherence to what they perceive to be artificial constructs of planning, schedules and appointments. Time is neither seen as a resource nor as an opportunity cost that equates to money – behaviour synonymous to *western management* practices. For most Greeks, matters can always be settled tomorrow; Lewis (1992) calls this a *Polychronic* culture.

It seems that the long history of instability in the external political and economic environment have made Greeks reluctant to plan ahead. Greek culture, on all levels, has always been characterised by its '*here and now*' attitude, mainly due to the environmental instability, wars and the resulting insecurity (Papalexandris *et al.*, 2002). What is missing is the sense of belief in the future and the systematic approach to a long-term program that will look ahead and prepare action plans to meet future needs. To this, should be added the frequent changes in legislation, practiced over the years by the state, and the general mistrust about what lies ahead, due mainly to the country's geopolitical position. According to Broome (1996), the Greek approach to time is considerably different from that found in the U.S. or Western Europe. There is little advance planning unless it is imposed from the outside.

Figure 2: High and low context cultures affecting management practices

LOW CONTEXT	HIGH CONTEXT
Business first	Relationships first
Value performance	Value goodwill
Legal contract	Trust
Fast and efficient	Slow and ritualistic

Source: Adapted from Hodgets and Luthans (2003)

There are indications that the above described situation is slowly (but steadily) reversing. Today, the fact that Greece is a member of the E.U., where detailed planning ahead of time is necessary, in order to participate in projects and get access to available funds, has forced state administration to adjust their practice and become more future-oriented. Especially after joining the European Monetary Union (EMU), Greece inevitably follows rules and procedures common in other European counties. It is worth noting that Greeks are among the most pro-European of all E.U. country nationals (Eurostat, 2007) – a clear indication that despite their unwillingness to engage in routine planning, they look to the future with hope (Papalexandris and Chalikias, 2002).

The implications for Greek managers operating in a high context and polychronic environment are profound – especially when dealing with '*Westerners*' people from low context and polychronic cultures. American and European multinational companies were the first that experienced these difficulties back in the early 1960s. The problem was – and to a large extent is – that western managers value most performance and business whilst Greeks value relationships and goodwill. In addition the mix of monochronic with polychronic cultures may result to unpredictable situations; it can either give rise to constant culture clash and disagreement or may yield synergies as features of each complements the other (Morden, 1996).

Part of the problem was solved as many Greek and multinational companies' executives received Anglo-Saxon education and training where management is seen as a general and transferable skill. The creation of this new cohort of managers has made a step towards harmonisation with the rest of the E.U. regarding managerial behaviour. It is however questionable if Greek managers will ever fully comply with the established western management values and best practices (Myloni *et al.*, 2004).

2.5. Studies related to the Greek management culture

The majority of the empirical studies that were carried out in Greece almost three decades ago, sketch a period where the level of industrialisation, the growth rate, and the level of disposable income were very low (Bourantas and Papadakis, 1996). During the 1950s and 1960s there was a high level of unemployment and a significant amount of immigration to industrialised countries like Germany and the United States. The level of education among employees, managers, and entrepreneurs was low. The civil war, which broke out just after World War Two, had only just been resolved, and for several years the political situation was unstable and lacking in the basic elements of democracy.

A study by Bourantas *et al.* (1987) addressed whether there have been significant changes since the early 1950s, in the needs of Greeks. Indeed, their empirical data suggest a process of evolution: the Greeks' physiological and security needs are relatively well satisfied, while new, higher-order needs now appear to be important (Maslow, 1970). The *'ego needs'* of self-esteem and status through wealth, which largely coincide with the national character of the Greek people, remain important, as would be logically expected.

It can be argued that Greek management has hardly existed until the early 1980s; all management practices and methods were largely adoption and/or adaptation of multinational companies' practices. Kanelpoulos (1991) has documented a lack of wide diffusion of modern management methods and systems such as formal structures, planning and control systems, human resource management systems, incentive systems, and management information systems. Bourantas and Papadakis (1996) argue that the salient characteristics of Greek management (in the 1980s and early 1990s) were the concentration of power and control in the hands of top management, and the lack of modern systems to support strategic decisions.

A question that raises here is whether management in Greece possesses any unique characteristics that distinguish it from other European management styles (e.g., the institutionalised participation of employees in Germany or Sweden and the informal network relationships among small and medium-sized enterprises in Italy). Bourantas and Papadakis (*ibid*, p.17) argue that:

> *"…we are so far unable to single out one important dimension distinguishing Greek management from the management style of other European countries. We would rather characterize Greek management as a Western-type management style that has not yet reached a high level of modernization and adoption of scientific and analytical methods and techniques."*

They also suggest (*ibid.*) that Greek management differs in the degree of modernisation and professionalism of management functions, management systems, and professional knowledge and skills. Thus, the differentiation of Greek management relative to that of other European countries is a matter of degree of development and does not constitute a different model. Although this view is correct and accepted by Greek academics and practitioners, it does not emphasise the role of culture in managerial work. This is normal because researchers at that time (early 1990s) in Greece have focused their attention to the improvement of management practices, financial performance and technological advancements (Papalexandris & Nikandrou, 2000). Culture is a concept appeared in the second half of this decade.

A driving force for the transformation of the Greek management and its convergence with the European one is the young generation (Koufidou & Michail, 1999): those that founded the post second world war Greek businesses in the last thirty to forty years are now retiring, and a new cohort of managers (the majority of whom received their formal graduate or postgraduate education outside Greece) has taken over. Therefore, it can be argued that as the *generation Xers* (those who where born between 1965 and 1974) are taking over, Greek management makes significant steps towards convergence with the European and/or American management style.

Bourantas & Papalexandris (1992) empirical study of five hundred eighty eight Greek managers found that 74% of respondents perceived that their organisations reflected either the characteristics of an Eiffel Tower culture (38%) or a Family culture (36%), providing support for the classification of Greek organisations as either of these two organisational culture types. Consistent with Trompenaars' (1993) work, it is probable that the size of the Greek organisation differentiated between the implementation of a Family or Eiffel Tower organisational cultural form. The two dimensions of Trompenaars' model, hierarchy/equity and person/task, can be operationalised by considering the degree of centralisation and the degree of formalisation, respectively. Thus, Greek organisations are likely to adopt an Eiffel Tower culture, characterised by centralisation of decisions-making authority (hierarchy focus) and high reliance on formalisation (task focus).

The hierarchy focus of the Eiffel Tower organisational culture seems congruent with Greek managers' high-power distance societal values (Joiner, 2001). Indeed, it is likely that encouraging Greek managers to increase their involvement in decision making may generate anxiety and lead to lower levels of performance. Such managers tend to prefer and respect a more non-consultative, decisive approach from their superior. Similarly, upper management inculcated with the values of a high-power distance culture, are likely to be reluctant to give up decision-making authority (perceived to be rightly bestowed upon them) to promote a relationship of greater equality in decision making (Veiga & Yanouzas, 1991).

2.6. Greece and the GLOBE project

GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organisational Behaviour Effectiveness) is a research programme initiated in the late 1990s, focusing on the culture and leadership in sixty two nations – including Greece. One of the outcomes of the GLOBE research was the construction of nine dimensions of cultural variation: performance orientation; future orientation; assertiveness; power distance; humane orientation; institutional collectivism; in-group collectivism; uncertainty avoidance; and gender egalitarianism. The subjects / participants of this survey were eighteen thousand middle managers in food processing (including luxury hotels), finance and telecommunications. The project used a multi-method approach by employing both qualitative and quantitative data. These data were collected from one hundred fifty Country Co-Investigators (CCIs) who are social scientists or management scholars. CCIs ensured the accuracy of questionnaire translations and are responsible for the writing of each country's culture specific descriptions that derive from the interpretation of the qualitative data collected from the questionnaires. The central theoretical proposition of the model that guides the GLOBE research programme, is that "*the attributes and entities that distinguish a given culture from other cultures are predictive of the practices of organisations and leader attributes and behaviours that are most that are most frequently enacted, acceptable and effective in that culture*" (House *et al.*, 2002). The theoretical background of this model is an integration of implicit leadership theory (Lord & Maher, 1991), value/belief theory of culture (Hofstede, 1980), implicit motivation theory (McClelland, 1985), and structural contingency theory of organisational form and effectiveness (Donaldson, 1993).

This process provided useful insights for each participative country cultural perspectives in relation to management and leadership (Javidan & House, 2001). One of the most interesting aspects of this project according to Thomas (2008) is that the cultural dimensions were measured both as *practices* (the way things are) and *values* (the way things should be). Although it is not the scope of this paper to discuss leadership related issues, the GLOBE project concludes to some interesting findings, regarding the Greek managerial behaviour related to the country's cultural and societal context. Thus, the most important Greek management attributes revealed by the Globe Project, follow below.

Assertiveness: It is the extent to which a society encourages people to be tough, confrontational, assertive and competitive versus modest and tender. This dimension is part of Hofstede's (1980) Masculinity dimension. Highly assertive societies such as Greece and the U.S.A. tend to have a '*can-do*' attitude and value competition. They have sympathy for these who are strong and the winners. Less assertive societies such as Sweden and Japan tend to prefer warm and cooperative relations and harmony.

Table 1: Country Rankings on Assertiveness

Least Assertive Countries in GLOBE		Medium Assertive Countries in GLOBE		Most Assertive Countries in GLOBE	
Sweden	3.38	Egypt	3.91	Spain	4.42

New Zealand	3.42	Ireland	3.92	U.S.A.	4.55
Switzerland	3.47	Philippines	4.01	**Greece**	**4.58**
Japan	3.59	Ecuador	4.09	Austria	4.62
Kuwait	3.63	France	4.13	Germany (Former East)	4.73

Source: Javidan & House, 2001, p.294

Uncertainty Avoidance: This dimension refers to the extent to which its members seek orderliness, consistency, structure, formalised procedures and laws to cover situations in their daily lives. Societies that scored low in uncertainty avoidance such as Greece and Russia, there is a strong tolerance of ambiguity and uncertainty. People are used to less structure and order in their lives and are not as concerned about following rules and procedures. In low uncertainty avoidance countries people are not used to structured or organised communication. Meetings are not planned in advance, they have not set time and there is a tendency to have open-agenda or no agenda at all. This dimension is linked directly with the Greek high context polychronic culture discussed above.

Table 2: Country Rankings on Uncertainty Avoidance

Lowest Uncertainty Avoidance Countries in GLOBE		Medium Uncertainty Avoidance Countries in GLOBE		Highest Uncertainty Avoidance Countries in GLOBE	
Russia	2.88	Israel	4.01	Austria	5.16
Hungary	3.12	U.S.A.	4.15	Denmark	5.22
Bolivia	3.35	Mexico	4.18	Germany	
Greece	**3.39**	Kuwait	4.21	(Former West)	5.22
Venezuela	3.44	Ireland	4.30	Sweden	5.32
				Switzerland	5.37

Source: Javidan & House, 2001, p.297

Institutional emphasis on collectivism versus individualism: This dimension reflects the degree to which individuals are encouraged by societal institutions to be integrated into groups within organisations and the society.

Table 3: Country Rankings on Individualism / Collectivism

Most Individualistic Countries in GLOBE		Medium Individualistic Countries in GLOBE		Least Individualistic Countries in GLOBE	
Greece	3.25	Hong Kong	4.13	Denmark	4.80
Hungary	3.53	U.S.A.	4.20	Singapore	4.90
Germany (Former East)	3.56	Egypt	4.50	Japan	5.19
Argentina	3.66	Poland	4.53	South Korea	5.20
Italy	3.68	Indonesia	4.54	Sweden	5.22

Source: Javidan and House, 2001, p.299

Opposing to that, the Greek society emphasises strongly on individualism and tend to value autonomy and individual freedom. Rewards are based on individual performance because self interest is more strongly valued than the collective group. This dimension indicates the societal transformation that occurred since the early 1980s when Hofstede (1980) has found Greece to score very low in the individualism-collectivism index.

In-Group collectivism (also referred as family collectivism): This is quite different than the above dimension; it reflects the extent to which a society's institutions favour autonomy versus collectivism. It refers to the extent to which members of a society take pride in membership in small groups such as their family and circle of close friends, and the organisations in which they are employed (Tajfel, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). In Greece being a member of a family and of a close group of friends, an in-group is very important to people. Papalexandris *et al.* (2002) indicate that one of the main characteristics of the Greek culture is strong family bonds, even though in big cities there might have been a recent change in this respect. The father is the centre of the family, he is responsible for all its members and the one who makes the final decision. There is a strict hierarchy and younger members are expected to show respect to the older. Power is concentrated in a few hands, which is usually accepted although it does not go unquestioned. Family members and close friends tend to have strong expectations from each other. Taking care of their needs and satisfying their expectations is critical to each individual. It is not unusual to forego due diligence, or equal employment opportunity, and to favour a close friend or family member in recruiting or in allocating rewards and promotions. Making regular references to one's family and especially one's father is quite acceptable and can go a long way in opening doors.

Table 4: Country Rankings on In-Group Collectivism

Least In-Group Collective Countries in GLOBE		Medium In-Group Collective Countries in GLOBE		Most In-Group Collective Countries in GLOBE	
Denmark	3.53	Japan	4.63	**Greece**	5.27
Sweden	3.66	Israel	4.70	Egypt	5.64
New Zealand	3.67	Qatar	4.71	China	5.80
Netherlands	3.70	Austria	4.85	India	5.92
Finland	4.07	Italy	4.94	Iran	6.03

Source: Adapted from Javidan and House, 2001, p.299

Performance orientation: This dimension refers to the degree to which a society encourages and rewards group members for performance improvement and excellence. Greece has scored low in this dimension; the society in this case tends to emphasise loyalty and belonging, view feedback as discomforting, emphasise tradition, and pay attention to one's family and background rather than performance. In addition, competition is associated with defeat and sympathy is valued. These characteristics express the widespread feeling of disappointment, over the general tendency towards mistrusting those achieving individual goals and reaching high levels of success. Here, a situation similar to the '*tall poppy syndrome*' is observed in Australia (Ashkanasy & Falkus, 1999): this refers to dislike of those who excel and are above others, especially when success leads to arrogance. Thus, although Greeks strive for achievements, they often refuse recognition to those performing well, while on the contrary they very often think of themselves as victims of this lack of recognition, having a feeling of being betrayed by their organisation and by society in general (Papalexandris *et al.,* 2002). This explains the low productivity tradition – especially until the mid1990s – in the private and mostly the public sector. In addition, managers from low-performance oriented cultures tend to prefer indirect and vague language. They are not too comfortable with strong results-driven and explicit communication. Hard facts and figures are hard to come by and not taken as seriously even when they are available. To a typical Greek manager, effective communication does not necessarily mean a clear agreement on facts and expectations. It may mean a discussion and exploration of issues without any commitments and explicit results.

Table 5: Country Rankings on Performance Orientation

Least Performance Oriented Countries in GLOBE		Medium Performance Oriented Countries in GLOBE		Most Performance Oriented Countries in GLOBE	
Russia	2.88	Sweden	3.72	U.S.A.	4.49
Argentina	3.08	Israel	3.85	Taiwan	4.56
Greece	**3.20**	Spain	4.01	New Zealand	4.72
Venezuela	3.32	England	4.08	Hong Kong	4.80
Italy	3.58	Japan	4.22	Singapore	4.90

Source: Javidan and House, 2001, p.301

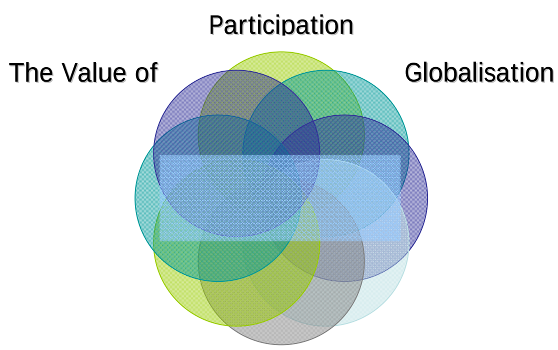
3. CONCLUSIONS FOR THE GREEK MANAGEMENT CONTEXT

This paper has explored the factors that shape and influence the management context in Greece. The latest research findings (Javidan & House, 2001; Papalexandris & Chalikias, 2002; Myloni *et al.*, 2004) suggest that both convergence and divergence with the rest of the E.U. seem to occur simultaneously (Figure 3).

The Greek context seems to exert a quite prominent effect in management practices. The deeply rooted family collectivism and other cultural characteristics such as the values of *Filotimo*, *Trust* and *Humanism* seem to constantly feed the divergence forces. For example practices such as the use of personal recommendations and references in recruiting employees - for both Greek firms and foreign subsidiaries - are still common even in larger Greek companies according to the GLOBE project (Myloni *et al.*, 2004). In addition, the poor performance of the country in the *Global Corruption Index* (Transparency International, 2007) is a strong indication that change will come in extremely slow pace (Lambropoulou, 2007).

On the other hand, despite the paternalistic and family oriented management style there are indications for a strong will to change. Figures from the GLOBE project show that Greece has low mean scores in '*society as is*' and higher scores in '*society should be*'. These results confirm the existence of a culture gap found in previous research studies on organisational culture. According to Bourantas & Papadakis (1996), there is a discrepancy between general organisational culture as perceived by managers and their personally preferred culture. This is considered to be an indication of the desire for change within organisations. The greatest pressures for convergence are coming from the obligations of Greece as a member of the E.U. and several other organisations which require planning ahead and efficient management of the various projects. While this affects mostly the public sector, globalisation put pressures for uniform management practices and policies in private sector organisations. Thus, a slow but steady movement towards harmonisation of management practices at least with the rest of the E.U. members is observed.

Figure 3: Factors affecting the Greek management



As a conclusion we argue that the level of the Greek management context deviation/differentiation from the developed E.U. countries, provides the basis for an argument that it is not only the adoption of best practices that makes management successful but also the interaction of management with the country's context. The greater the level of confidence and understanding of the context's requirement, the more likely for the management practices to be successful. Thus, a '*best fit*' approach would be appropriate for the Greek management context which receives pressures from both the international business environment and the local distinctive characteristics.

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CUSTOMER PERCEPTIONS OF SERVICE QUALITY IN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY: IMPORTANCE PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the present study is to identify the factors of importance service quality experience in luxury hotel industry in north India and to find out the difference between the specific and overall components of importance and actual stay experience of the customer in hotels.. A structured questionnaire was used to conduct this study with input from local hotel managers and individuals. Items were selected and customized based on the previous literature. The survey was conducted at various luxury hotels in north India. The findings of the study give us the idea about the importance score statistically significant to higher than the performance rating of the hotels. Overall, the results give us the idea that there was a significant difference between expectations of the guests and actual experiences, thus highlighting managerial implications for the Hotel industry.

Keywords: Service quality, Customer experiences, Brand image, Customer Satisfaction, Hospitality industry, India.

INTRODUCTION

"Quality tourism experiences" is a term repeatedly used by destinations and organizations involved in tourism and hospitality research, planning, policy, management, marketing and delivery. Its meaning is usually implicitly or tacitly assumed rather than defined (Jennings, 2006). Additionally, the assumed "taken for granted" meaning(s) may be further qualified, as exemplified in the following four industry sector-based texts. The first is from India regarding the hospitality sector, "the task on hand for the tourism industry and the government (in Karnataka, India) is to convert its strengths into marketable, easy to access, good quality tourism experiences" (Lakshman, 2002, p. 1). The second is from a Canadian government tourism agency, "The Ministry of Tourism supports delivery of high quality tourism and recreation experiences to Ontarians and visitors to Ontario" (Ministry of Tourism, Canada, 2008). The third is a joint construction between a United States government aid agency and an Armenian private sector association, "A simple, clear and concise strategy is required to guide and further develop Armenia's tourism sector, aiming at: ensuring Armenia provides unique, high quality, high value tourism experiences that are regionally and globally competitive" (USAID and CAPS, 2007, p. 4). The fourth example furthers the concept high-value as opposed to quality and although it omits the word tourism it is implied since it is taken from the work 'Higher value tourism experiences' profiling two New Zealand tourism companies. This example notes, "it (tourism industry growth) is about developing . . . high-value experiences that people will happily pay more to enjoy" (Green, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, NZTE, in Harding 2006). While such qualifiers distinguish differences in the degree of quality being offered, that is, good quality, high quality, or high-value quality; definitions or criteria are not provided with which to understand what these qualifiers and indeed the phrase quality tourism experiences mean. With regard to the latter, implied in the four examples are service quality and hospitality sector service experiences; notions of excellence; the perceptions of getting value for one's money; the matching of expectations with experiences; as well as links between expectations and satisfactions. Despite wide usage, quality tourism experiences remains a term, which eludes a definitive meaning. That is not to say that researchers, planners, policy-makers, managers, marketers and tourism industry providers have been deterred from using it or trying to understand it.

The survival of hospitality industry in the current competitive environment where most hotels have quite similar luxurious physical facilities much depends on delivery of service quality aiming to result in customer delight. Pallet et al. (2003) suggests that quality has to be visioned, initiated, planned, delivered, monitored and sustained. The researchers propose that quality problems and key staff issues in hotels often can be solved with a common "People and Quality" strategy which involves placing customer needs in the heart of the whole process; seeking suggestions form staff; developing corporate quality and people philosophy; training and empowering staff; benchmarking and reviewing (Pallet et al., 2003).

Service experience can be defined as the subjective personal reactions and feelings that are felt by consumers when consuming or using a service. It can be contended that service experience has an important influence on the consumer evaluation of and satisfaction with a given service (Otto & Ritchie, 2000). Hence, a better understanding of experiential phenomena in tourism service is particularly important, and will permit the industry to better perform. Service quality has for long been recognized to play a critical role in a firm’s competitive advantage (Fitzsimmons and Fitzsimmons, 1994). In recent years, companies have become convinced of the strategic benefits of quality (Phillips, Chang, and Buzzell 1983). As a result, many large companies have created quality-measurement programs that at-tempt to relate product and service attributes to customer evaluations of quality (Hauser and Clausing 1988; Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry 1990). In many service industries, companies have created programs that include surveys to elicit customers' assessments of service quality; a feedback loop allows service changes to be implemented and then evaluated with subsequent survey data. Quality is understood to mean conformance to specifications, though more recently it is taken to mean meeting and /or exceeding customers’ expectations.

It has suggested that attempt to have effective service quality management and experiences by the customer is the best way to achieve greater customer contentment Kandampull, Mok and Sparks (2001). It had showed that service quality can only be achieved if organizations empower their employees to underpin service quality dimensions Oakland (2005) and Kandampully, et al., (2001). These dimensions include tangibles (physical facilities, equipment, and appearance of personnel); reliability (ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately); responsiveness (willingness to help customers and provide prompt service); assurance (knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence); and empathy (caring, individualized attention provided to customers). Quality of products and services is one of the competitive requirements in order to build up the brand image of the firms in the hospitality industry to survive. To enhance the customer satisfaction and facing the challenges, it is Compulsion for the hospitality service providers to offer the quality services to the customer and make their quality experiences memorable. (Hung,Huang and Chen, 2000). Service quality is characterised by the following aspects: It is multidimensional; has underlying quality dimensions, some of which change over time; is intangible, although it is often assessed through tangible clues; is the result of both service processes and service outcomes; depends on the difference (gap) between customer expectations and perceptions

The aim of the study is

- To identify the factors of importance service quality experience in stars hotel in north India.
- To find out the difference between the specific and overall components of importance and actual stay experience of the customer in hotels and the

Hypothesis

- There is significance difference between expectations of the guests and actual experiences of the customer in luxury hotels.

LITERATURE REVIEW

With regard to marketing literature, since the late 1990s and into the early stages of the twenty-first century, “experience” and “experiences” have burgeoned as a specific focus. In particular, experience marketing has become a niche area in and of itself (see the works of O’Sullivan & Spangler 1998; Smith & Wheeler, 2002; Marconi, 2005; Gilmore & Pine, 2002; Lenderman, 2005). Additionally, it should be noted that the particular study and use of service quality measures have permeated tourism, hospitality as well as marketing since the 1980s with the work of Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985). The latter three pioneered SERVQUAL (1988), which is predicated on an expectation / performance disconfirmation paradigm derived from gap theory (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry 1985).The concept of "quality" has been contemplated throughout history and continues to be a topic of intense interest today. Quality presently is addressed in numerous academic and trade publications, by the media, and in training seminars; it is perhaps the most frequently repeated mantra among managers and executives in contemporary organizations**.** Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1985, p.48) propose a formal definition of customer perception of service quality as “the degree and direction of discrepancy between customers’ service perceptions and expectations. The service quality model, SERVQUAL based on the expectancy disconfirmation theory has been discussed in hospitality and tourism marketing research (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1985, 1988), has been widely applied in the tourism and hospitality industry literature. However, Fick and Ritchie (1991) argue that SERVQUAL scale does not adequately address both affective and holistic factors which contribute to the overall quality of ‘service experience’. In Otto and Ritchie's (1996) study, differences between service quality and experience quality are discussed. Experience quality is subjective in terms of measurement while service quality is objective. The evaluation of experience quality tends to be holistic gestalt rather than attribute-based, and the focus of evaluation is on self (internal) but not on service environment (external). In addition, the scope of experience is more general than specific, the nature of benefit is experiential/hedonic/symbolic rather than functional/utilitarian, and the psychological representation is affective instead of cognitive/attitudinal. Experience quality can be conceptualized as customer affective responses to their desired social–psychological benefits. It also refers to a specific service transaction, such as contact with people who contribute to the actual experience (Chan & Baum, 2007). Otto and Ritchie (1996) develop an experience quality scale with four factors – i.e. hedonics, peace of mind, involvement, and recognition – using consumer survey data obtained from three tourism service sectors including hotels, airlines, and tours and attractions.

The plethora of studies regarding customers' attitudes toward services has focused on perceived ser-vice quality. Perceived service quality is defined as the customer's assessment of the overall excellence or superiority of the service (Zeithaml 1988). Parasuraman et al. (1985, 1988) consider that a customer's assessment of overall service quality depends on the gap between expectations and perceptions of actual performance levels. Both Customer Satisfaction/Disconfirmation and perceived service quality are postulated to be influenced by the gap between expectations and perceptions of performance (i.e., disconfirmation). However, the Customer Satisfaction or Disconfirmation literature suggests a more elaborate model in which disconfirmation, expectations, and actual performance levels affect customer satisfaction, which, in turn, becomes an input to customers' perceptions of service quality.

Satisfaction was typically described as a post choice evaluative judgment concerning a specific purchase selection (Churchill and Surprenant, 1982; Oliver, 1980; Day 1084). Kotler (2000, p.36) stated that "Satisfaction is a person's feelings of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing a product's perceived performance or outcome in relation to his/her expectations". Customer satisfaction is the leading and one of the most important criterion for determining the quality that is actually delivered to customers through the product/ service and by the accompanying servicing (Vavra,1997), simply stated, customer satisfaction is essential for corporate survival in this modern competitive world. So many studies have given the idea and have found that it costs about five times as much in time, money and resources to attract a new customer as it does to retain an existing customer (Naumann, 1995). This creates the challenge of maintaining high levels of service, awareness of customer expectations and improvement in services and product. Furthermore, customer satisfaction is recognized as of great importance to all commercial firms because of its influence on repeat purchases and word-of mouth recommendations (Berkman and Gilson, 1986). Satisfaction reinforces positive attitudes toward the brand, leading to a greater likelihood that the same brand will be purchased again dissatisfaction leads to negative brand attitudes and lessens the likelihood of buying the same brand again (Assael, 1987, p. 47).

It has been observed that in today's hospitality environment, the true measure of company success lies in an organization's ability to satisfy customers continually, Gabbie and O'Neill (1996). Increasingly customers are demanding value for money in terms of both price and the quality of product/service being offered. In order to ensure market success, hospitality organizations of all types are being forced to stand back and take a long, hard look at the way they are currently doing business. As such, failure by management to interpret customer desires accurately can result in loss of business and possible bankruptcy for some. There has been some confusion regarding the differences between service quality and satisfaction (Storbacka, Strandvik, and Grönroos (1994). Satisfaction would, according to Liljander and Strandvik (1993), refer to an insider perspective, the customer's own experiences of a service where the outcome has been evaluated in terms of what value was received, in other words what the customer had to give to get something. According to Hunt (1977), satisfaction is an evaluation that an 'experience was at least as good as it was perceived to be'. One way to achieve strong relationships and, thus, long relationships is to ensure that customers are satisfied. The proposition is that dissatisfied customers will defect; the relationship ends. Several researchers have proposed that this is a simplification of the matter (Zeithaml, et al., 1993). Customers seem to have a zone of tolerance, which according to Zeithaml, et al., (1993) can be defined as the difference between an adequate and a desired level of service. According to Kennedy and Thirkell (1988), customers are prepared to absorb some unfavorable evaluations before expressing them in terms of net dissatisfaction.

METHODOLOGY

This study investigated the area of service quality, customer perceptions and their actual experience at different star categories of hotel felt by guests in north India. The study also offers a possibility to compare and contrast with other similar studies undertaken in different parts of the globe. The aim of the study is to assess the customer's common expectations and factors of importance service quality experience during their stay at various star hotels and Compare the actual customer service quality experience with service quality delivered by the hotels. Moreover, to give viable suggestions and recommendations to the hotel industry to make the customer's experience memorable and in the process enhance their brand image in today's competitive market. The study was undertaken at different star hotels consenting to participate at Jammu, Chandigarh and Delhi in north India.

The methodology involved surveying consenting hotel guests in the hotel lobby or other convenient location within the hotel. A questionnaire was structured for this study with input from local hotel managers and individual items were selected and customized based on studies such as Lockyer (2000), Mohsin (2003) and Mohsin and Ryan (2005). The questionnaire comprised three sections. Section one gathered data on importance attributed to different features of front office, room service and in-house café-restaurant by guests pool area and gymnasium centre. Section two sought an evaluation of how the establishment performed in the opinion of guests, as per the listed features of front office, room service and in-house café/restaurant. Section three accumulated demographic details in terms of gender, age, type of trip (business or holiday) and country of residence. The study uses a Likert Scale of 1 to 5, where 5 represents highest importance or agreement with the statement and '1' represents lowest importance or unacceptable level of service offered; 3 represented no opinion. A useable sample of 400 participants resulted over a period of almost five months. And also uses for the measurement for the performance or to measure the actual performance of the hotels which also ranges from 1 to 5.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The tourists were selected randomly at convenient locations within the star category hotels of Jammu, Chandigarh and Delhi because these are the main destination among others in north India. The respondents included 46% (Females and 54% males. The majorities of the respondents were married and were travelling with family members. Majority of respondents, 43.5% were in the 20-35 years age group, followed by 24.2% in 36-50 years; 20.3% were below 19 years, and 50 years or above percentage was 12%. To check data reliability split half reliability measures were in excess of .916 while the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was .785. Descriptive statistics was used for the importance and performance evaluation and factor analysis is used for identifying the factors for the importance items. To make a comparison of their means i.e. importance and performance test was used to determine the difference, if any, between importance-performance. The seven underlying factors which emerge from this analysis could be classified and named as but due to no highest loading on the seventh factor no consideration is given to this factor. Two attributes which have explained the variance less than .50 i.e. the physical appearance of the hotel, Public area cleanliness like lobby, toilets, Banquets; therefore these two items are deleted. (Refer Table 2.)

Table 1: Total Variance Explained (Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis)

Component	Initial Eigen values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	16.330	36.922	36.922	16.330	36.922	36.922	7.345	19.660	19.660
2	4.321	11.078	48	4.321	11.078	48	4.808	13.628	33.388
3	3.863	9.905	57.905	3.863	9.905	57.905	4.376	11.221	44.609
4	3.084	7.908	65.813	3.084	7.908	65.813	4.368	11.20	55.781
5	2.860	5.874	71.687	2.291	5.874	71.687	4.313	11.06	66.101
6	1.596	4.092	75.779	1.596	4.092	75.779	4.043	10.366	76.467
7	0.999	2.561	81.741						
8	0.876	2.246	83.986						
9	0.764	1.958	85.944						
10	0.651	1.67	87.614						
11	0.633	1.622	89.236						
12	0.531	1.362	90.599						
13	0.449	1.151	91.75						
14	0.4	1.026	92.776						

15	0.359	0.919	93.696							
16	0.334	0.856	94.551							
17	0.303	0.776	95.327							
18	0.239	0.614	95.941							
19	0.212	0.543	96.484							
20	0.185	0.474	96.957							
21	0.169	0.434	97.391							
22	0.149	0.583	97.774							
23	0.125	0.521	98.095							
24	0.101	0.458	98.653							
25	0.087	0.423	98.876							
26	0.084	0.414	99.09							
27	0.07	0.379	99.269							
28	0.059	0.351	99.421							
29	0.04	0.302	99.653							
30	0.036	0.292	99.745							
31	0.026	0.266	99.81							
32	0.022	0.202	100.001							

Table 2: Rotated Component Matrix (Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
Quick confirmation on reservation.	0.860				
Simplicity of making a reservation	0.776				
Helpful and friendly staff.	0.693				
First contact with the hotels employees	0.762				
First notion of the hotel.	0.759				
Your first not ion or Impression of the hotel.	0.757				
The check in and out of the hotel	0.747				
Furnishing in the room	0.733				
Reception area	0.668				
Dealing with complaints	0.659				
The overall Quality of food		0.906			
choice of the food on menu card		0.868			
Choice of selection of beverages		0.864			
Ambience of restaurant and bars		0.852			

Quality of restaurant food		0.809			
Prompt room service		0.741			
The value for money of the hotel			0.877		
Value for money for room service			0.859		
Value for money of the restaurant Service			0.814		
Value for money of the housekeeping services			0.808		
Value for money of the recreational activities			0.602		
Hotel location				0.890	
Interior design				0.854	
The décor of this hotel is stylish and attractive				0.829	
A secure safe is available in the room of this hotel				0.819	
Hotel's atmosphere				0.670	
The quality of service					0.890
Timely service					0.872
The appearance of the staff					0.843
Product Knowledge of the staff					0.828

The willingness and ability of the personnel to. Provide service					0.809
Quality of service compared to other hotels of The same category					0.690

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. A. Rotation Converged In 8 Iterations

Factor - 1 Front Office Operations -This factor shows highest factors loading on these attributes Quick Confirmation on Hotels Reservation (0.860), Simple and ease to Making a Reservation (0.776), Helpful and Friendly Staff (0.693), First contact with the hotel employees (0.762), First notion of the hotel (0.759), Your first notion or Impression of the hotel.(0.757),The check in and out of the hotel (0.747), Furnishing in the room (0.733), Reception area (0.668) and Dealing with Complaints (0.659). Further the variance explained for this factor was 19.66 %.

Factor - 2. Food and Beverage Services quality - This factors shows highest loading on these attributes overall Quality of food (0.906) , choice of the food on menu card (0.887), choice of selection of beverages (0.864), Ambience of restaurants and Bars (0.852), Quality of Restaurant Food (0.809), Prompt Room Service (0.741) and variance was explained for this factor was 13.628%.

Factor - 3.Value for the hotels Products and Services – This factors shows highest loading on these attributes ,The Value for Money of the Hotel (0.887), Value for money for Room Service (0.859), Value for Money of the Restaurant Service (0.814), Value for money of the Housekeeping Services (0.808). Value for money of the Recreational Activities (0.602) and variance was 11.221%.

Factor - 4. location and Ambience of Hotels - This factors shows highest loading on these attributes, counts for Hotel location (0.890) , Interior design (0.854), The decor of this hotel is stylish and attractive (0.829), A secure safe is available in the room of this hotel (0.819), Hotel's atmosphere (0.670) and Variance was explained by this factor was 11.20 %.

Factor - 5. Product knowledge and Presentation- This factors shows highest loading on these attributes, The Quality of Service (0.890), Timely Service (0.872), The appearance of the Staff (0.843), Product Knowledge of the Staff (0.828), The willingness and ability of the personnel to Provide Service (0.809), Quality of Service compared to other hotels of The same Category (0.690) and Variance was explained by this factor was 11.06 %.

IMPORTANCE PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

The importance-performance technique has been widely used in tourism academic literature. It is defined as a model of reasoned action by Sheppard, Hartwick and Warshaw (1988). Major parts of the survey in the current study include sets of Importance - Performance type questions. The mean has been compared to determine the difference, if any, between importance performance factors. The Importance Performance Analysis was conducted on the factors derived above, based on the services being provided by the star rated hotels under study viz a viz these factors the following results were achieved.

Table no 3. Means differences Between Importance and performance.

Quality variables	**Mean-Difference between-Importance and Performance score**	**t- Value**
1.Front office operations		
Quick confirmation on reservation	1.21	1.33**
Simple and Ease to Making a Reservation	1.17	1.32**
Helpful and Friendly Staff	1.11	1.25**
First Contact with the Hotel Staff	1.05	1.20**
First notion of the Hotel	0.95	1.06**
First notion/impression of your with the hotel	0.94	1.05**
The check in and out of the Hotel	0.92	1.04**

	0.90	1.02**
The Physical appearance of the Hotel	0.90	1.02**
Reception Area	0.88	1.00**
Dealing with complains		
2,Food and Beverage services		
the overall Quality of food	1.32	1.45**
choice of Food on menu card	1.28	1.40**
Choice of selection of Beverages	1.26	1.41**
Ambience of Restaurant and bars	1.25	1.37**
Quality of Restaurant Food	1.17	1.30**
Prompt room service	1.13	1.27**
3.Value for the Products and Services		
Value for money of the hotel	1.16	1.30**
Value for money for Room Service	1.13	1.25**
Value for money of the Restaurant Service	1.01	1.13**
Value for money of the Restaurant Service	0.86	0.96**
Value for money of the Recreational Activities	0.86	0.96**
4.Hotel Location and Ambience		
Hotel location.	1.17	1.30**
Interior design	1.13	1.27**
The decor of this hotel is stylish and attractive	1.01	1.16**
A secure safe is available in the room of this hotel	0.82	0.94**

Hotel's atmosphere	0.82	0.94**
<u>5. Product Knowledge and Presentation</u>.		
The Quality of Service Timely Service	1.28	146**
The appearance(presentation) of the staff	1.17	126**
Product Knowledge of the Staff	1.13	1.19**
The Willingness and ability of the Personnel to Provide Service	1.01	1.12**
Quality of service compared to other Hotels of the same category	0.88	1.00**

Note: * *t*-test two tail probability <0.05, ** *t*-test two tail probability <0.01

The factor one Front office operation shows the statistically difference among all the items. Which are shown as follows in descending order according to their mean differences. The variables which were having more than '1'mean difference indicated the larger disparity between the expectation and performance of the hotels and demanded for extra efforts to meet with the expectation of the customers. Quick confirmation on reservation (mean difference 1.21), Simple and Ease to Making a Reservation (mean difference1.17) Helpful and Friendly Staff (mean Difference1.11), First Contact with the Hotel Staff (mean difference1.05), First notion of the Hotel (mean difference 0.95), First notion/impression of your with the hotel (mean difference 0.94), The check in and out of the Hotel (mean difference 0.92), The Physical appearance of the Hotel (mean difference 0.90), Reception Area (mean difference 0.90), Dealing with complains (mean difference 0.88).

Factor second Food and beverage service shown that there was statistically difference among all the variables like the overall Quality of food (mean difference 1.32),choice of Food on menu card (mean difference 1.28), Choice of selection of Beverages (mean difference 1.26),Ambience of Restaurant and bars,(mean difference 1.25), Quality of Restaurant Food (mean difference 1.17), Prompt room service (mean difference 1.13) and implicated on the hotels to improve and work on the above variables so that the guests or customers feel satisfied and their experience can be crafted as memorable one in hospitality industry.

Again in the third factor the statistically difference found in all the items but more than one were value for money of the hotel (mean difference 1.16), Value for money for Room Service (mean difference 1.13), Value for money of the Restaurant Service (mean difference1.01).

The importance and performance analysis had shown the statistical difference between the expectation and performance of the hotels on the variables like Hotel location. (1.17) Interior design (1.13), the decor of this hotel is stylish and attractive (1.01) which indicates the mean difference more than one '1'again left a managerial implications for hotel industry to work on these items in order to feel the customer happy an aesthetic satisfied.

At last again the factor product knowledge and presentation included the variables which were having more than '1' mean difference and indicated that there were disparity among the perception of the guests and performance of the hotels. The Quality of Service Timely Service (1.28), The appearance (presentation) of the staff (1.17), Product Knowledge of the Staff (1.13), The Willingness and ability of the Personnel to Provide Service (1.01) and put the implications on the management of the hotel industry to conduct the regular classes and training sessions for their staff in order to get possess with detail product knowledge and improve their presentation when dealing directly to the guests.

As per above discussion of each factors it was found that each factors factors had shown the statistically significance difference between expectations of the guests and actual experiences of the customer in luxury hotels. Hence, the hypothesis accepted (Refer Table No.3).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The aim of the present study was to identify the factors of importance service quality experience in stars or luxury hotel in north India; to find out the difference between the specific and overall components of importance and actual stay experience of the customer in hotels and hypothesized that there was a significance difference between expectations of the guests and actual experiences of the customer in luxury hotels. We know that quality management is a one of the most important and critical issues so, all the hospitality and tourism organizations in fact service industry worldwide consider and give priority and importance to service quality because it helps them to create high standards and build up their image in the modern competitive world. The brand image of the offerings is further improved by this act and the perception of the customers regarding such brands is enhanced. Quality management can be strategic and tactical tool and is has a positive impact on the related areas such as employee morale, reduction in working costs and waste and time management.

The present study depicted the idea regarding the influence of customer service experience on the brand image and how it is positioned in the mind of consumers while choosing their hotel brand. The analysis had shown the statistical differences between importance and performance evaluation of the guests in every area like front office operations, food and beverage service, value for the quality services, Hotel design and ambiance and products knowledge and presentation. There was not a single item which is having the mean value which exceeded the importance area.

This study highlights that there is a serious and severe problem in management and control of the service and experiential quality in the hospitality industry in India. To identify the factors which are really important in order to get the satisfaction and getting the repeat business and building their brand image in the competitive market factor analysis was applied. It identified six factors front office services, Food and beverage services, Value for the products and services, Hotel location and Ambience, Product knowledge and presentation, Brand experience, image and loyalty. Overall the results indicate statistically significant differences in importance and performance evaluation responses of the hotel guests. These differences left a managerial implication for the hotels managers recognize these differences and paln appropriate actions to improve upon. Such an approach will help them to build customer loyalty and get repeat business. Providing the services according to the commitment / standards of the hotel industry viz a viz service quality is often a challenge faced by many service organizations. Studying customers' attitude, seeking feedback and accumulating that information to analyze helps to identify areas of disparity through importance performance evaluation, thereby helping to develop appropriate actions and strategy which can address differences if any and build their brand image today's competitive world. This study attempts to facilitate such process. Managers should work on the important features like online reservation, accessibility/ease of the reservations, giving proper training to employees at the regularly intervals to make them more professionally oriented so that they can understand the needs of the customers and make them comfortable and happy during their stay in the hotels. They should be given advance training and development programmes should be conducted regularly to increase their product knowledge and efficiency in order to deliver the quality services to the customers. Moreover, the customer should be charged according to the value services being provided by the hotel. To provide excellent quality service should be motto of the hotel industry. Things should be worked upon in the food and beverage service areas too, choice and quality of the food from the different cuisines like Indian continennetal, Chinese and others international cuisines should be provided.

The research has some significant value as it contributes a lot to the previous literature and support, provides to other local and international researchers for a comparative study of service quality perceptions of various chains and star category hotel guests across the world. Most luxury hotels worldwide can easily compete with physical evidence and comforts, but, it is the service in the hotel which makes the difference which really matters a lot in building up their brand image in this cut throat business in hospitality where there are different hotels players are working . It needs to be explored how hotels are working to achieve customer satisfaction or meet with the expectation of the hotel guests and improve their brand image. This is possible through continuous research and contribution to literature and this is something this study has attempted to undertake. Further study with a larger sample size accumulated from different cities and location of other parts of India is suggested.

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EVALUATING DESTINATION TOURISM WEBSITES WITH APPLICATION ON EGYPT

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ABSTRACT

Tourism is not only the largest industry in the world but also the number one online segment. The emerging globalization and abundance of supply increase the level of competition and pressure on individual destinations and attractions, which makes the web a valuable tool for marketing travel and tourism (Rita, 2000; Scott and Baggio, 2009). The Web is a perfect medium for conveying information to tourists all over the world, in a direct, cost- minimizing and time effective way (Gratzer and Winiwarter , 2003).

Since Egypt is a very special tourism destination among the Arab countries, it is imperative to develop competitive representation of the country on the web in order to contend in today's dynamic marketplace.

Accordingly, the real challenge of the research is to develop a viable instrument comprising comprehensive factors that make destination tourism websites useful, comprehensive, more stimulating and visually appealing. Furthermore, the research tends to apply this instrument to the main Egyptian official tourism websites promoting the country, compared to that of other top tourism destination countries, so as to understand the defects and differences from the best ones and identify directions for improvement

with the intention of satisfying the expectations of tourists and increasing their desire to visit Egypt.

Key words: evaluation, destination tourism websites, Egypt, top destination countries.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

1. INTRODUCTION:

A tourist destination is considered an open system in which natural, economic, and social factors interrelate in order to attract tourists (Rodriguez-Diaz and Espino-Rodriguez, 2008).

Since the use of the Internet among online travelers is increasing, the availability of easily accessible, prompt, accurate, relevant information has become the goal of every country to become more competitive and profitable, capable of realizing the new market opportunities provided by e-tourism (Kaplanidou and Vogt, 2004).

Therefore, the website design is one of the key issues to consider for achieving success in e-tourism business (Rita, 2000). A properly designed website provides great opportunities to reach new markets and to improve business efficiency (English Tourism Council 2002; Rita, 2000). Likewise, it can facilitate the travelers' planning, ensuring that they make the right choices and having an enjoyable experience. Besides, it can serve as the distribution point for all the services they will need as they plan their vacation. Consequently, it is very important to evaluate the tourism websites to improve the experience of visitors visiting the site (Rita, 2000).

2. Web site Evaluation:

Website evaluation promises strategic benefits such as customer retention, positive return on investment and leadership within the fierce market competition (Park and Gretzel, 2007).

According to (Zhou and DeSantis, 2005), the following factors are highly influential to the success of a tourism website: direction information (interactive maps), accessibility to comprehensive provision of local and utility information (visa and policy information, currency consideration, time and weather conditions, effective links, index and search engines), attractive description (using of multimedia functions, photo gallery), as well as, multilingual and multicultural user information with simple and clear wording and terminology.

Furthermore, (Chavali and Sahu, 2008**)** state that the important parameters which provide the basis for website evaluation are: the provision of trustworthy, dependable and reliable information content including information of attractions in and around the place, tourism related news, policies and the site visitors' number; interaction and interchange functions such as options given to visitors to share ideas, experiences and information, consultation and email facilities, website search, as well as, language translation; customer oriented webpage design covering online queries, surveys, maps, directions regarding reaching destinations and call for advertisements; promotional direction of the website; technical quality which permits ease of use and features like photographs, interactive video presentations, as well as, voice and animation which render the website more attractive, interesting and realistic to visitors (Chavali and Sahu, 2008**).**

In Björk (2010), information content and structure in combination with a user friendly interface are recognized as quality dimensions for tourism websites.

Park and Gretzel (2007) state that the key evaluation factors for tourism websites comprise the following:

- **Ease of Use :** usability, accessibility, navigability and logical structure;

- **Responsiveness:** accessibility of service representatives, e-mail service, reply to online reservations, contact information, availability of online help functions such as a toll-free telephone number;

- **Fulfillment:** order process, accuracy of service guarantee, billing accuracy, online booking process and confirmation;

- **Security/Privacy**: protecting information during transmission and subsequent storage, security for online purchases/reservations and privacy statement;

- **Personalization**: personalized attention, as well as, customization of offerings and information;

- **Visual Appearance**: attracting attention and conveying image aesthetics;

- **Information Quality**: variety, scope, currency, conciseness, accuracy and uniqueness of information, influence and reliability;

- **Trust**: brand recognition and consistency;

- **Interactivity:** interactive features such as virtual tours, interactive communication (chat, etc.).

Furthermore, the study of Rita (2000) describes the most important features that a website should present as follows:

- up-to-date and complete information on the destination (e.g. resorts, restaurants, weather, etc.);

- ease of navigation/usability (using limited number of elements per page);

- online booking facilities (hotels, flights);

- striking offers (toll-free number, free products and services like postcards, wallpaper, and screensavers);

- interactive tools (chat lines, stimulating consumer comments);

- banners for brand image-building;

- being attractive (video-clips, audio, photos, etc);

- databases which are built with names and addresses of customers and potential tourists who visit the site and inquire about further information;

- a vision or a mission statement;

- background texture and/or color used throughout the site should never overwhelm the text, but rather complement it.

In the study of Kaplanidou and Vogt (2004), they identify three design/technological elements that contribute to the overall website quality: ease of navigation, technological creativity and accessibility together with the quality of the content, the visual/graphical representation and the presence of interactive elements. Good navigation is a necessity of a successful website design. It is characterized by organized pages, the presence of the navigation bar on every page and the opportunity to access the home page from every sub page within the website. Furthermore, an internal website search engine will potentially decrease search time for information and lead to higher levels of satisfaction for the website visitor. By accessibility is meant the downloading time. Download time depends on the amount of graphics employed, the type of Internet connection and the web browser used. In addition, the content influences the perceived image of the destination and creates a virtual experience for the consumer. A website should have accurate content that satisfies the user, an interactive map and contact information on the homepage, as well as, a “home” button on every page that leads the user back to the home page easily. Moreover, a successful website should provide links that work properly and send the user to the right page in a consistent way. Furthermore, every picture used in website should be accompanied by a caption to convey to the users where this area is located.

Moreover, Kalodikis and Yannakopoulos (2008) affirm five basic rules of web design: easy to read; easy to navigate; easy to find; consistent in layout and design and quick to download. As for the content of the tourism website, they add that the information provided should be simple, avoiding unnecessary details and data that complicates the download procedure. In addition, tourism websites should provide images, videos and other material that represent the local culture and physical attractions of tourism areas; destination interactive maps; relevant links and useful web pages (e.g. local tourism boards, schedules and itineraries, etc.); hotels, airlines, car rental companies; webpages in different languages (e.g. English, French). Besides, websites should use a clear font and avoid using animation that does not provide any substantial information.

Concerning the web services of the tourism website, Kalodikis and Yannakopoulos (2008) add that it should offer the possibility of online payments through the use of credit cards; provide financial facilities, discounts and special offers (new packages, etc), as well as, online reservations and weather forecasts. Additionally, a tourism website may incorporate systems to collect as much information as possible regarding users' needs and habits and customize products and services according to them. A tourism website should further adopt security methods to protect the tourists' online transactions and use web-marketing techniques to promote itself like brand building, banner advertising, ads in search engines, directories, emails and newsletters.

Moreover, the study of (Lu *et al.*, 2007) affirms that navigational menus or toolbars and site maps can help improve the navigation on a website. It also mentions that tourism websites often offer a great variety of tourism information which should be up-to-date and objective including scenery introduction, tourism news, journey recommendations, special services information, weather forecast and other relevant information. Furthermore, different types of transactions should be carried out on the site, such as flight, hotel and tour package reservations. Having a network security certificate is also an important consideration, since it provides safety for customers' information, as well as, the communicational factor referring to contents as contact address, telephone numbers, contact e-mail and online consultation.

In addition, many visitors like to share their travel experience with others and know how others feel about the destinations or the services they are interested in. Therefore, features that facilitate the communication between the company and its customers and the communication among the travelers are important contents that tourism destinations should incorporate into their sites (Lu *et al.*, 2007)

Finally, Ho and Lee (2007) have identified five core components of e-travel service quality including information quality, security, website functionality, as well as, customer relationships and responsiveness.

RESEARCH PROBLEM:

The literature review investigated reveal that several evaluation studies have been conducted by individuals and organizations on improving the effectiveness of tourism websites which promote destinations all over the globe using a multitude of approaches. This makes it difficult to compare findings and identify factors that have consistently been used to evaluate websites (Park and Gretzel, 2007). Besides, there is no generally acceptable method for the evaluation of website success in tourism (Park and Gretzel, 2007). Thus, the purpose of this research is to contribute to this emerging body of literature by providing a comprehensive viable instrument for evaluating tourism destination websites and utilize it in examining Egypt's online representation, as well as, that of the top destination countries. It is believed that the study may be beneficial to researchers investigating tourism destination websites' evaluation. On the one hand, results from the current research can help identifying well-designed destination tourism websites, so that travelers can have confidence in these websites. On the other hand, tourism websites can use the criteria of the study to evaluate themselves and improve the drawbacks.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES:

The following hypotheses are drawn the research:

1- The main official tourism websites in Egypt suffer from some defects.

2- The top destination countries worldwide employ the website quality criteria more than Egypt.

METHODOLOGY:

From the review of previous studies examining tourism destination websites, it is obvious that there is noticeable replication of the factors identifying destination tourism websites' quality and success. Furthermore, it seems to the researcher that all the criteria mentioned in previous studies refer mainly to two main components: content and structure of tourism websites. Therefore, the researcher investigated the factors and findings of previous studies and identified the comprehensive factors determining the ideal tourism destination website. These factors are considered as subcategories of the content and structure components of tourism websites, forming the basis for the evaluation of the research websites' sample. These factors are as follows:

Concerning the content of tourism destination websites, it should encompass the following factors: interactive elements such as interactive maps with directions regarding reaching destinations; internal search engines, contact information; up-to date and inclusive information about the destination (current climate and weather, accommodation, attractions, currency exchange rates/converter, visa and/or privacy policy); number of site visitors; options given to visitors to share ideas, experiences and information and take part in online chats, consultation and email facilities, online queries, surveys; databases and directories; the option of language translation; online reservation facilities (hotels, flights, etc.); bulletin boards (news report, newsletter), terms definition; brief paragraphs; site map; useful links and finally, advertisements and/or free products and services like postcards, wallpaper and screensavers.

As regards the structure of the tourism destination websites, a “home” button, a navigation-bar and sufficient white space should exist on every page. In addition, site map, contact information and a vision and/or a mission should be placed on the home page. Furthermore, multimedia functions should be used in order to be attractive (photographs with captions, videos, flash animation, striking banners for brand image-building, etc.) and the background texture and/or color used throughout the site should never overwhelm the text but rather complement it.

The study evaluated the content and structure of ten of the main official tourism websites promoting Egypt, compared to twelve of the main official tourism websites in six of the top destination countries in 2010. This is mainly to underscore the distinctions between Egypt and these countries and propose suggestions to improve Egypt's websites to become effective destination marketing tools, as well as, to cover a diversity of tourism websites and have a more persuasive and logical interpretation of the results.

The researcher adopted the content analysis methodology in examining the websites. Content analysis methodology "is used to determine the presence of certain words, concepts, themes, phrases, characters, or sentences within texts or sets of texts and to quantify this presence in an objective manner" (http://www.gslis.utexas.edu/~palmquis/courses/content.html). In Malhotra (1999:200), content analysis is defined as "the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of manifest content of a communication. It includes observation as well as analysis". Hence, content analysis can be an effective tool to examine the content and structure of destination tourism websites.

The sample of websites was selected from the main official tourism websites of every country provided by Google search engine. The six top destination countries are France, the USA, China and Spain, as well as, Tunisia and the United Emirates as top Arab countries according to the WTO (2010) ranking.

The homepage of each of the 22 websites was thoroughly examined and the data was recorded in terms of the criteria previously determined.

EVALUATION OF WEBSITES:

1- The Egypt State Information Service: http://www.sis.gov.eg/En/Default.aspx

2- The Egypt's Information Portal: http://www.eip.gov.eg/Default.aspx

The Egyptian Information Portal was chosen as the best information portal in 2005 in a competition organized by the Egyptian Ministry of Administrative Development for encouraging internet services.

3- The Egyptian Tourist Authority: http://www.egypt.travel/index.php

4- The Egyptian Ministry of Tourism: http://www.tourism.gov.eg/default.aspx

5-The Egyptian Tourism Federation: http://www.etf.org.eg/

6- Chamber of Tourism Establishments: http://www.cte-egypt.org/default.asp

7- Egyptian travel Agent Association: http://www.etaa-egypt.org/Default.aspx?Id=112

8- Egyptian Hotel Association: http://www.egyptianhotels.org/en/

9- Egyptian Chamber of Diving and Water Sports: http://www.cdws.travel/Default.aspx

10- Tour Egypt: www.touregypt.net/

Table 1: Evaluation of the Main Official Tourism Websites of Egypt

Sites			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	%	Average %
Content	Interactive elements	Interactive maps	√	√	√	√	X	X	X	X	X	√	50	70
		Search engine	√	√	√	√	X	X	√	√	X	√	70	
		Contact information	√	√	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	90	
	Acc urat	accommodation	X	√	√	X	X	X	X	X	X	√	30	

		weather	√	√	√	X	X	X	X	√	√	√	60	40
		attractions	√	√	√	X	X	X	√	X	√	√	60	
		Currency exchange rates/converter	X	√	X	X	X	X	X	√	X	√	30	
		Visa and/or privacy policy	X	√	√	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	20	
	No. of site visitors		√	X	X	X	X	X	X	√	X	X	20	20
	Interaction with customers	Email facilities	X	√	X	X	X	X	√	√	X	√	40	35
		Online queries	X	√	√	√	X	X	X	X	X	√	40	
		Share of ideas & experiences	X	√	X	√	X	X	X	X	X	√	30	
		Surveys	X	√	X	X	X	X	X	X	√	√	30	
	Language translation		√	√	√	X	√	√	X	√	X	√	70	70
	Online reservation facilities		X	√	√	X	X	X	X	√	X	√	40	40

-continued-

Content	News and/or newsletter	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	√	√	√	90	90
	Terms definition	X	√	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10	10
	Brief paragraphs	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	100	100
	Databases and directories	X	√	X	√	X	X	√	√	X	X	40	40

		Advertisement	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	√	10	10
		Free products and services	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	√	10	10
		Site map	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	√	X	√	80	80
		Useful links	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	√	X	X	70	70
Structure	On the home page	Site map	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	√	X	√	80	90
		Contact information	√	√	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	90	
		A vision and/or vision	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	100	
	On every page	A "home" button	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	√	90	77
		A navigation bar	X	√	√	X	X	X	X	√	X	√	40	
		Sufficient white space	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	100	
	Multimedia functions	Photographs with caption	√	√	√	X	X	X	X	X	√	√	50	70
		Video and/or flash animation	√	√	√	X	√	√	√	√	X	√	80	
		Striking banners	√	√	√	√	√	X	X	√	√	√	80	
	Background texture and or color not overwhelming the text		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	100	100

Source: The researcher √= existent X= nonexiste

Table2: Evaluation of the Main Official Tourism Websites of Top Destination Countries

			France		USA		China		Spain		The United Emirates		Tunisia		%
Sites			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Content	Interactive elements	Interactive maps	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	√	√	√	√	92
		Search engine	√	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	92
		Contact information	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	100
	Accurate & inclusive information	accommodation	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	100
		weather	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	100
		attractions	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	100
		Currency exchange rates/converter	X	√	X	X	X	√	X	X	X	X	√	√	33
		Visa and/or privacy policy	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	100
	No. of site visitors		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	0
	Interaction with customers	Email facilities	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	√	√	√	√	92
		Online queries	√	√	X	X	√	√	√	√	X	√	X	X	58
		Share of ideas & experiences	√	X	√	√	√	√	X	X	√	√	√	X	67
		Surveys	√	X	√	√	X	√	√	√	X	√	√	X	67

	Language translation	√	√	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	X	75
	Online reservation facilities	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	92

-continued-

Content		News and/or newsletter	√	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
		Terms definition	√	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	√	X	√	X
		Brief paragraphs	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
		Databases and directories	X	X	X	X	X	X	√	√	√	√	√	X
		Advertisement	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	√	X	√	X
		Free products and services	X	√	√	X	X	X	X	X	√	X	√	√
		Site map	√	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
		Useful links	√	√	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Structure	On the home page	Site map	√	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
		Contact information	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
		A vision and/or mission	X	X	√	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	√
	On every page	A "home" button	√	√	√	√	X	√	X	√	√	√	√	√
		A navigation bar	√	X	X	√	X	√	√	X	X	X	X	X
		Sufficient white space	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√

	Multimedia functions	Photographs with caption	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	100
		Video and/or flash animation	√	X	√	√	√	√	X	X	√	√	√	√	75
		Striking banners	√	X	√	√	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	75
	Background texture and or color not overwhelming the text		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	100

Source: The researcher √= existent X= nonexistent

1- France Guide.com, the Tourist Office Website for Tourism in France:

http:www.franceguide.com/

2- The French Tourist Office: http://www.francetourism.com/index.htm

3- Visit Alsace - official website of tourism in East of France: www.tourisme-alsace.com/index.php%3Fl...

4- Travel and Tourism Sites for U.S. States and Territories US Government:

http://www.usa.gov/Citizen/Topics/Travel_Tourism/State_Tourism.shtml

5- Discover America: The official travel and tourism website of the United States:

http://www.discoveramerica.com/ca/

6- Beijing Website International- eBeijing.gov.cn: http://www.ebeijing.gov.cn/

7- National Tourism Administration of the People's Republic of China: http://en.cnta.gov.cn/

8- Spain Travel Guide: http://www.spanish-fiestas.com/

9. TURESPAÑA: http://www.spain.info/

10. Government of Dubai: Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing:

http://www.dubaitourism.ae/

11. UAE News and Information-United Arab Emirates: http://www.uaeinteract.com/

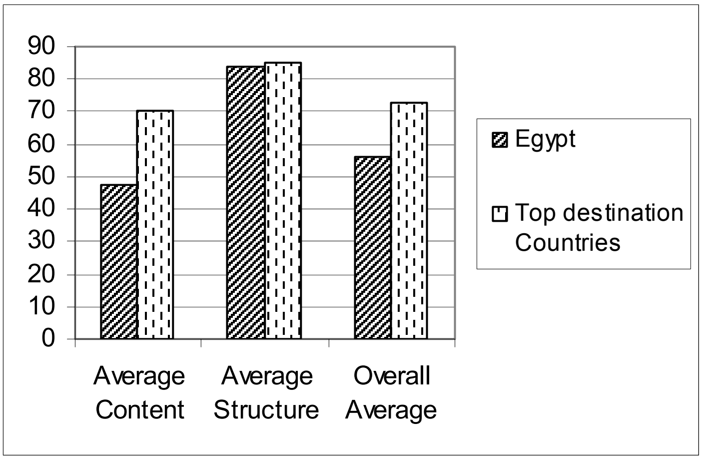
12. Tunisia Tourism Board-Official Site: http://www.cometotunisia.co.uk/

Table 3: Summary of the Evaluation Results:

	Websites of Egypt	Websites of the Top destination Countries
Average Content Criteria	47.5%	70%
Average Structure Criteria	84%	85%
Overall Average (content & structure criteria)	56%	73%

Source: The researcher

Figure 1: Illustration of the Evaluation Results:



FINDINGS AND RESULTS:

Table 3 and Figure 1 illustrate that 56% of the evaluated websites of Egypt employ the overall criteria (content & structure) stated, of which 47.5 % pursue the content criteria and 84% use the structure ones.

On the other hand, 73% of the evaluated tourism websites of the top destination countries fix to the overall criteria (content & structure), whereas 70% employ the content criteria and 85% utilize the structure criteria.

By investigating the sites more closely (see Table 1 & Table 2), it can be noticed that 70% of the sites of Egypt reviewed offer interactive elements (only 50% provide interactive maps), while 95% of the sites of the top destination countries appreciate them.

Besides, this study found that many tourism websites ignore the number of site visitors, especially that of the top destination countries.

One phenomenon that the researcher also discovered is a significantly higher provision of inclusive and accurate information by the websites of the top destination countries when compared to the Egyptian official websites.

Furthermore, it is valuable to report that the websites of the top destination countries offer more weight to the interaction with customers' aspect than the Egyptian tourism websites.

In addition, the researcher's observation revealed that regarding the other content criteria including the provision of news, terms definition and databases and directories there were not great differences between the percentages of the tourism websites of Egypt and that of the top destination countries, except for the offering of advertisements, useful links and free products and services criteria. Moreover, it has been noticed that all the sampled websites (of Egypt & of the top destination countries) offer brief paragraphs, sufficient white space on every page and their background texture and/ or color doesn't overwhelm the text.

Moreover, it is obvious from the evaluation of the sample that all sites of Egypt (100%) provide a vision and mission on the home page, while only 67% of the sites of the top destination countries use this criterion. On the other hand, all the sites examined of the top destination countries (100%) provide photos with caption, whereas this criterion is employed by only 50% of the evaluated websites of Egypt.

Additionally, from the studied sites, it is apparent that more websites of the top destination countries offer online reservation facilities than those of Egypt.

As regards the structure criteria, it is interesting to learn that the Egyptian websites show the same percentage or a higher one than the websites of the top destination countries except for the multimedia functions criterion.

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

From the interpretation of results, it can be observed that there are apparent differences between Egypt and the other countries of different economic level as well as culture. The websites of the top destination countries adopt the criteria for websites' quality more than Egypt, **which affirms the second hypothesis of the research.** Furthermore, the data analysis illustrates that Egypt's websites have adopted the structure criteria, to a great extent, more than the websites of the top destination countries, however; they have many weak points as regards the content criteria mentioned. **This affirms the first hypothesis of the research.**

Based on the results, we suggest the following improvements for the main websites of Egypt to bridge the gap among countries and become more effective as marketing tools:

Egypt's websites should give more weight to the interactive elements, especially the provision of interactive maps and search engines. Furthermore, the tourism websites of Egypt should provide more inclusive information regarding accommodation, weather, attractions of the country, currency exchange rates, as well as, visa and/or privacy policy.

In addition, the websites promoting Egypt should offer more facilities for the customers' interaction and surveys, as well as, more free products and services in order to be more attractive and effective and cater for visitors' needs and wishes.

Moreover, the language translation option should be more provided to reduce language barriers on tourism. Finally, the provision of the number of sites' visitors can give indication of the websites' success and more online reservation facilities can offer the visitors the opportunity to plan their trip more easily.

FURTHER RESEARCH:

It is valuable to evaluate the tourism websites of Egypt after implementing the suggested changes. It is also important to investigate how cultural differences influence the tourism information seeking patterns of visitors

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GIS TECHNIQUE FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF TOURISM ACTIVITIES: THE CASE OF ELBASAN REGION IN ALBANIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper provides an initiative for the development and the implementation of Geographic Information System (GIS) in the tourism industry for Elbasan, which represent an important region in the centre of Albania. It is focused on the analysis, decisions making and management of tourism activities using GIS technique. GIS integrates spatial database, statistical data and textual information. Applications of GIS in tourism and recreation planning illustrate that GIS is a strong and effective tool that can help in tourism planning and decision-making. The results of this paper suggest that the power of GIS lies not only in the ability to visualize spatial relationships, but it also reflects many interconnected components and complex relationships in the tourism industry.

Key words: GIS, management, statistics, tourism.

1. INTRODUCTION

Many studies in the literature suggest that statistics is very important for the management of tourism enterprises worldwide. In general, statistics offers a range of methods for the collection, presentation and analysis of data (Lehmann, 1988). It is an important part of scientific method for empirical inquiry (Good, 1988; Mayo, 1996). Statistical information becomes an important instrument, both for the definition of policies and the evaluation of their impact and for the current management of state and private enterprises. In addition, adequate statistical information makes it possible to analyse sectors and -sub-sectors (including tourism) more accurately, thus helping the activities of commercial enterprises and the transparency of the market itself. This explains the priority given in many countries with high tourist flows to the maintenance of a statistical database which corresponds to the needs of the sector.

The success of the tourism industry in any country depends on the ability of that country to develop, manage and market the tourism facilities and activities in that country. (Karagiannis St., 2008). For many developing countries, in particular the less developed countries (LDCs) and small economies such as Albania, tourism is probably the only economic sector which provides concrete and quantitative growing trading opportunities. Therefore, this paper gives discussion on an initiative for the development and the implementation of Geographic Information Systems in the tourism industry for an important region of Albania.

For a tourist, coming to a new destination can be both exciting and freighting. To get the most out of the visit, he needs different kinds of information especially geographical information. He wants to know where the tourist agency is, where tourist attractions and hotels are, where sightseeing trips go and so on. GIS is able to show a large amount of tourist information in an easy to read key map. The benefits of using a GIS are obvious: The information is always up to date.

What is a "GIS"?

A GIS is an intelligent system enabling the combination of the latest technologies in the fields of information technology, digital data processing and spatial analysis for encoding, storing, processing, maintaining, analysing and presenting data in association with their geophysical location. It is a "geo-referenced" data analysis and presentation system. Economic, social and natural actions and phenomena all have a spatial component which is furthermore one of the primary modes of organising the statistical information concerning these phenomena. The latter are thus linked with geographical territory in a very general way. By coupling these two characteristics, we can greatly enhance their effectiveness.

A GIS offers the possibility of a structured data management, data access as well as efficient analysis procedures applied to the data. Within GIS, objects are being built by linking spatial data with semantic information. A GIS can be used to answer different questions depending on the data stored in it. (Seker et al, 2001).

The link with statistics

A GIS links the geo-graphical data with the descriptive attributes (statistics) produced or collected. The efficiency of a GIS depends especially on good geo-referencing of the attribute data: a spatial code must be used to link these discrete or continuous data with the regions or precise locations to which they relate. This eliminates a certain number of conceptual stumbling blocks, which traditional statistics frequently had to contend with, particularly when the data was subject to temporal and spatial variation. The close interlinking of statistical data and the methods of spatial analysis requires more attention from statisticians to geographical information and the rules for its management. They need the formulation of precise rules for the collection, treatment and distribution of spatial statistics.

2. GIS TECHNOLOGY AND TOURISM STATISTICS

Tourism statistics is generally organised in a multidimensional database. The combination of multidimensional database technology and the GIS technology enables the geographical analysis of tourism information from different perspectives. With an implemented GIS, a local tourist information guide is created with powerful search and analysis functionality. For example, where should a tourist attraction be placed due to the geo-demographic profiles in different areas? Or, are there enough transportation facilities to support the attraction? All over the world, getting maximum benefits from tourist zones according to the concept of sustainable development is possible only by using management plans suitable for the characteristics of the area. Including partnership approach, this is becoming very common, effective, correct and fast decision-making is possible using a geographic information system.

Tourism and recreation are considered as very important aspects in social and economic life. Since a tourism product is a combination of goods (transportation, accommodation, services, etc), it is difficult to carry out strategic and competitive tourism activities without tourism planning.(Karagiannis St., - Apostolou A.,2004). Experiences show that tourism planning has recently changed such that it involves many actions, participants, levels of decisions and implementation. Success is measured by the achievements of an interaction and collaborative actions, among public and private sectors effecting the tourism development. GIS can be an excellent tool not only to design and regulate the correct spatial development, but also to support and control the process of the plan implementation.

The following definition done by Semcor Company explains how GIS can be used for the improvement of the tourism industry. "The concepts of time and place are ingrained in the tourism industry. Having an understanding of your customer base and where they come from, and knowing what they want to see and do and how to get them there are essential to the success of any tourism operation. Whether you are a hotel manager, a diving instructor, or a government official, a GIS can provide you with the tools you need to better prospect, understand and serve the needs of your clients". (Semcor 2001)

Use of GIS technology for tourism planning offers a group of advantages in data documentation and processing (Hogan 2001). There are two categories for the use of a GIS system in tourism, public use and management use. The public wants to find geographic information about a place before they go there. They want to know where things are located, what amenities are available, what the climate is like, and they want to be able to do site specific searches to find information. This can be achieved through Web-based GIS, or Information Kiosks located in key tourist areas (Ugarte, 1997). The other user of the GIS is the Management side; management may be done by individual operators, a tourism group, or by the local municipality. Management users want to ask the system for where customers are coming from, their socio-economic backgrounds, and good potential locations for new tourist sites, etc. A list of general questions that public and management user may ask of a GIS system is given in the following table.

Table 1 Public user and Management user questions in GIS.

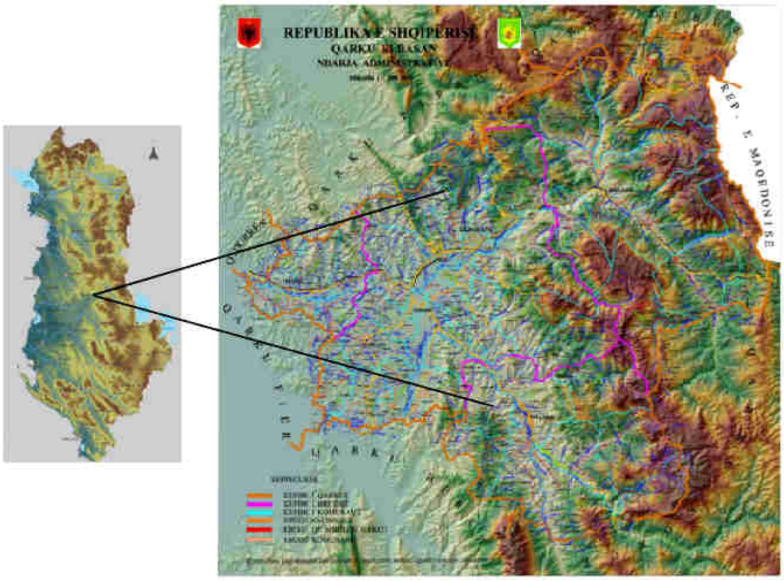
Public User Questions	**Management User Questions**
Where is the city, state or country located? What is the climate? Does it have warm or cold weather? What is the best time of year to visit? What is the official language? Where are the accommodations in the city located? What is their classification? What are their rates? What kinds of public transportation are available? Where are rental car agencies located? Where are the cultural/natural amenities located? What is their operation schedule? What attractive places are near my hotel? Where are the banks? Where is the police station? Where is the hospital? Where are the shopping centres?	What are the areas that tourists are interested in? What are the physical-geographic characteristics of those areas? What are the accommodations available? What is their classification and categorization? Where is the stops/station of public transport facilities located? What are the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the local population of each tourism space? What are some plans, programs and projects that would help stimulate tourism activity. What infrastructure services are in current and potential tourist areas? Which is the service quality? What is the tourism demand for attractive places, tourist equipment, and services? What public and private institutions are available that is competent in tourism planning?

(Caldera de Ugarte et al 1997)

3. APPLYING GIS TO ELBASAN DISTRICT

This study is focused in Elbasan district, which has a lot of historical and tourist places. Region of Elbasan, figured in Tourism Movement Schedule, lies in the centre of Albania. It has a surface of 3292 km^2 and a population of 434.911 habitants (population for 2009). It is limited in north and north-west with the district of Tirana, in east and south-east with the district of Korca, in west and south-west with district of Berat. There are four unions in its structure: the union of Elbasan, which is the centre of this district, the union of Librazhd, the union of Peqin and the union of Gramsh. Officially the district has 7 corporations, 43 communes and 386 villages.

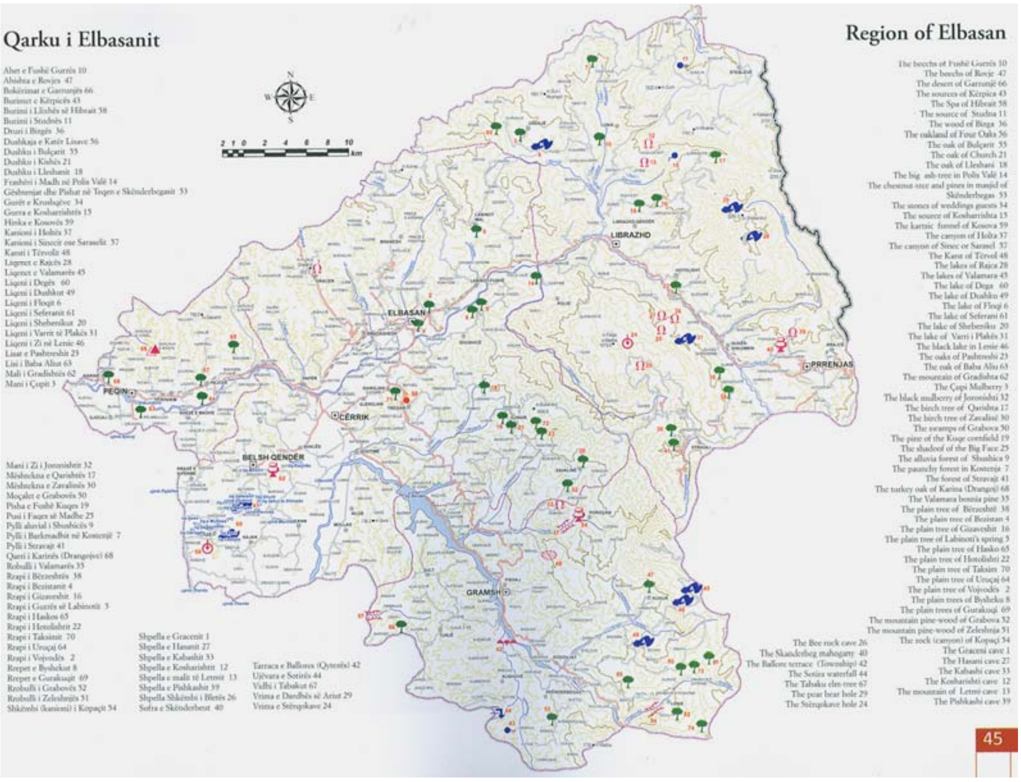
Figure 1 Elbasan District



The union of Elbasan has an area of 1481 km^2 and a population of 282.277 habitants (population for 2009). In its structure, there are three corporations (corporation of Elbasan, Cerrik and Belesh) and 20 communes. It lies in the centre of Albania and it is limited with: in north-west with union of Tirana, in east and north-east with the union of Librazhd, in south-east with the union of Gramsh, in south with the union of Berat and Kucova and in south-west with the union of Lushnja. It lies in the field with the same name, in the right of river Shkumbin. In addition, about 38% of Elbasan district is formed by mountains, 34% by hills and 28% by fields. Some of the natural attractions are: the natural trees of Bysheku, the natural tree of Bezistan, the lake of Shebeniku, the old church, etc. The tourism department in Elbasan is still collecting the data for the tourist places. Study area is given in the following figure:

These results can be achieved by queries in GIS Design and Application for Tourism:

· Determination of important and necessary places for tourism.
· Determination of historical and tourist places.
· Determination of the best suitable hotel.
· Determination of the optimum plan for sightseeing places.
· Determination of the shortest distance between the selected places.



GIS was used as an analytical tool for establishing arrangement and density of tourist objects in that area, as well as their characteristics, such as type, category, name, quality, etc.

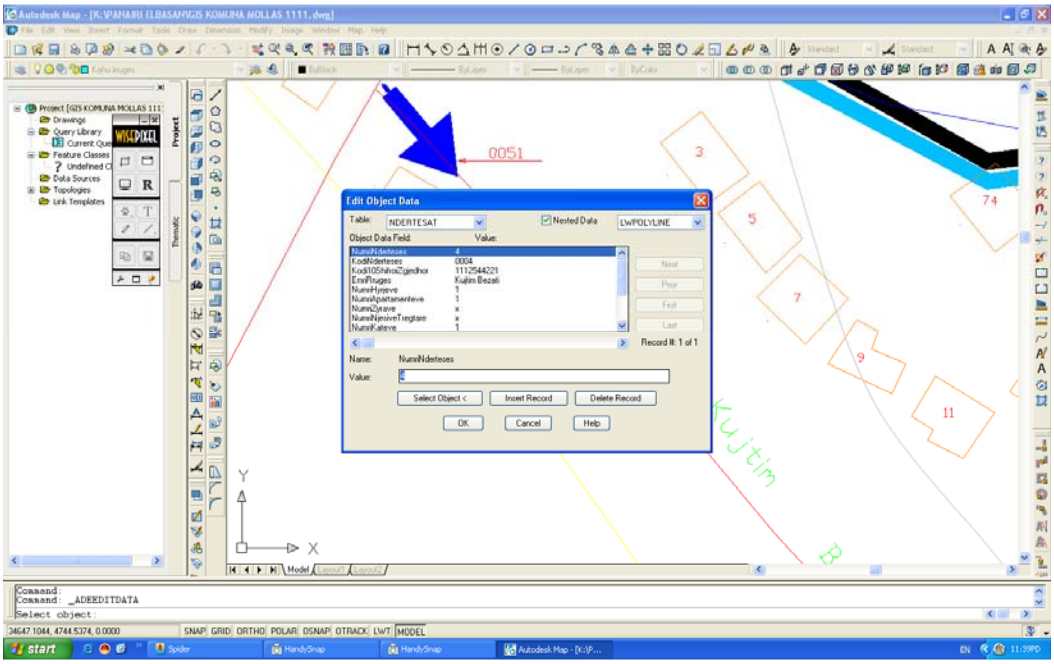
Graphic data was obtained via different ways. Some of them have been taken from Council Region of Elbasan Authority and some of them obtained from hard copy maps by means of digitizing. These maps in different scales have been brought together and then used in this study. This study is oriented to tourism activities. Two different groups of variables have been determined. These are functionality variables, such as political territories, natural resources, cultural-historical resources and facilities, and tourism qualifications such as infrastructure, environmental quality, land use and economic activities.

Table 2 Type of data presented by GIS

Name of Layer	Attributes
Way	ID, Name, Type
Bus Station	ID, Name
Restaurant	ID, Name, Type of Food, Address
Public Building	ID, Name
Church	ID, Name
Public Garden	ID, Name
Hotel	ID, Name, Category, Pool, Air Condition, Car Rental, Room Service, Shower, Sightseeing, Coffee, Restaurant, Number of Room, Cable TV, Lounge, Laundry, Meeting Room, Fitness, Disco, Address, Web, Telephone, Fax
Mosque	ID, Name, image, document
Police Station	ID, Name, Telephone
Museum	ID, Name, Telephone, image
Boundary Of District	ID, Name, Area, Length

Several different queries and analysis have been done after attributes are connected to graphic data. The easiest query is identifying an object. One of the similar query results is given in the following figure:

Figure 2 Some results from the use of GIS



4. CONCLUSION

Tourism is a highly complex activity and thus requires tools that help in effective decision making with regard to competing economic, social and environmental demands of sustainable development. Applications of GIS in tourism and recreation planning illustrate that GIS is a strong and effective tool that can help in tourism planning and decision-making. Impact assessment and simulation are increasingly important in tourism development, and GIS can play an important role in auditing environmental conditions, examining the suitability of locations for proposed developments, identifying conflicting interests and modelling relationships. However, because of the highly data-driven applications of GIS, its use by tourism and recreation professionals have been very limited. This is mainly due to lack of long-term, comprehensive, and systematic data on tourism issues. Currently, GIS application in tourism has been much restricted to inventory and case illustrations. With consistent spatial data on tourism locations, characteristics of these locations, and long-term visitor use data, its applications will grow significantly. The growing worldwide interests in tourism and recreation studies will certainly demand more sophisticated and complex applications of GIS in these fields.

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GREECE: LIGHTS, CAMERA … TRAVEL!

ANALYSIS ON THE PROCESS OF ATTRACTING FOREIGN FILMMAKERS AND THE WAY THEIR FILMS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO STRENGTHEN A DESTINATION BRAND: THE CASE OF GREECE.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to get insight in the way Greece attracts foreign film producers to the country and in what way these films can contribute to the destination branding of Greece. More specifically, this paper presents the case study of the film *Mamma Mia!* which has been shot on the islands of Skopelos, Skiathos and partly on Pelion in the year 2008. The way this film can contribute to the destination promotion of Greece has been explored, as well as the reasons for Dutch tourists for wanting to visit a specific destination because of film. Surveys are held with Dutch tourists between the age of 16 and 70 in order to get insight in the image the Dutch tourist has from Greece by means of film. The results are used for recommendations to the Greek National Tourism Organisation / Ministry of Tourism on how to position Greece as an interesting filming location to attract more foreign film producers to the country. Next to that it can be used for recommendations on the promotion of films that take place in Greece, in order to attract more tourists to Greece.

Key words: destination branding, film, tourism, Greece

INTRODUCTION

Set-jetting tourism or film-induced tourism is a growing phenomenon worldwide. Set-jetting tourism is defined here as travelling to a particular destination after having seen it in a film or television show. Film is of increasing importance to a destination since it can put a place on the map and is more effective than tourism advertisements as it is viewed by millions of people. Though it is clear that film is an important and powerful image maker, the sector is often still seen as a risk because there is no guarantee of a film's success. Many destinations are now working to become 'film friendly' by developing relationships with major film studios, international and local PR companies and advertising agencies. Activities include providing relevant filming information regarding sites, tides, legal requirements and so on. Film is often considered as 'free footage' in similar terms to 'free ink' *(Beeton, 2005),* but the effort required to encourage film can be costly and time consuming. Though much of this work is time-consuming and not always successful, it is crucial to attracting film activity: as such "free footage" has a higher credibility than a tourism body promotion has. In Greece, the importance of film productions has already been recognized and in 2007 the Hellenic Film Commission Office was established in order to provide every possible service to foreign film producers to shoot their film in Greece.

Films shot in greece

Even though Greece is not perceived as an international film location of scale because there are no large film studios, its landscapes and islands have been used as the setting of many international cinematographic productions. According to the publication 'Made in Greece' *(GNTO, 2009)* about 234 international film productions have been shot in Greece between 1935 and 2009. 'Zorba the Greek' (1964) made thousands of movie-goers fall in love with Greece for life. The film follows the adventures of a British writer who moves to Crete and learns lessons in life and love from an earthy peasant named Zorba, played by Anthony Quinn. (See table 1 for a small overview of popular films that have been shot in Greece.)

Greece initiated its relationship with foreign cinema in 1957 through the American film "Boy on a Dolphin", with Sophia Loren and Alan Land. Greece was discovered by many tourists through the cinematographic films of the 50's *(Moira–Mylonopoulos–Kondoudaki, 2009:239).*

Today Greece's picturesque islands, many of them major tourist destinations, have provided the backdrop for scenes in recent films, but have not served much as major movie locations. Part of the film 'Tomb Raider 2' took place on the island of Santorini. Part

Table 1: Popular films that have been shot in Greece

Popular films shot in Greece 1957 - 2009			
FILM	**LOCATION**	**CAST**	**YEAR**
Boy on a Dolphin	Athens, Hydra	Sophia Loren, Alan Ladd	1957
Never on Sunday	Athens, Piraeus	Melina Mercouri, Jules Dassin	1960
The Guns of Navarone	Rhodes, Symi	Gregory Peck, Anthony Quinn	1961
Zorba The Greek	Crete	Anthony Quinn, Alan Bates	1964
The Greek Tycoon	Athens, Mykonos, Corfu	Anthony Quinn, Jacqueline Bisset	1978
For Your Eyes Only	Corfu, Meteora	Roger Moore, Carol Bouqet, Topol	1981
Summer Lovers	Crete, Delos, Mykonos, Santorini	Peter Gallagher, Daryl Hannah	1982
The Big Blue	Amorgos, Ios	Jean-Marc Bar, Rosanna Aquette	1988
Pascali's Island	Rhodes, Symi	Ben Kingsley, Charles Dance	1988
Shirley Valentine	Mykonos	Pauline Collins, Tom Konti, Julia McKenzie	1989
Mediterraneo	Kastelorizo	Diego Abatantuono, Claudio Bigagli	1991
Captain Corelli's Mandolin	Cephalonia	Nicolas Cage, Penelope Cruz	2001
Boat Trip	Hydra	Cuba Gooding Jr, Horatio Sanz, Roger Moore	2002
The Bourne Identity	Mykonos	Matt Damon, Franka Potente	2002
Lara Croft Tomb Raider, The Cradle of Life	Santorini	Angelina Jolie, Gerard Butler	2003

The Sisterhood of the Travelling Pants	Santorini	Alexis Bledel, America Ferrera	2005
Mamma Mia!	Skiathos, Skopelos, Pilio	Meryl Streep, Pierce Brosnan, Colin Firth	2008
My Life in Ruins	Athens, Delphi, Ancient Olympia	Nia Vardalos, Alexis Georgoulis	2009

Source: 'Made in Greece - International Film Productions Shot in Greece' and Mr Holevas, Hellenic Film Commission Office (2009)

of the film 'The Bourne Identity' took place in Greece as well, namely on the island Mykonos *(Hadoulis, 2007).* The film Captain Corelli's Mandolin took place on Cephalonia, where an Italian soldier falls in love with a Greek girl, during the Italian occupation of Greece. The film was based on the book 'The Secret Diary of Captain Corelli' by Louis de Bernieres. Many tourists (and paparazzi magnets like Madonna) still visit the island Cephalonia because of the film. Fans can still relax with a cappuccino at one of the Corelli Cafes in the port town of Sami, where much of the filming took place. Unfortunately, most of the set was destroyed after the release of the film though. According to Dr Polyxeni Moira *(Associate professor - Department of Tourism Industry Management - Technological Education Institute of Piraeus)* the projection of the film in 2001 was reported to have a very positive impact on tourist traffic to the island, which increased by 14-16%. Numbers rose 6% the following year (2002) and in 2003 the arrivals remained the same as the previous year. In 2002, Greece was the 13th most popular destination worldwide and the eighth most popular European destination *(WTO, 2003).*

Even more significant was the rise in numbers from Britain specifically, with 2000 seeing a 12.4% increase and a 22% increase in 2001 (See appendix I). British tour operators took advantage of the film in order to promote the island as a tourist destination *(Hudson & Ritchie, 2005).* In addition, some internet sites listed Cephalonia and the settings filmed in the movie among the places of interest. But, since the film set was destroyed, there was not much left for visitors to satisfy their interests. Some entrepreneurs, nevertheless, took the opportunity to use the popularity of the film and established new businesses, giving them names inspired by the movie, such as "Captain Corelli's Bar" *(Moira, 2009).*

Fet-jetting tourism in greece: the impacts of films

Even though clearly a large amount of films have been shot in Greece, it seems that five of these film productions have been a major boost for tourism: Never on Sunday (1960), Zorba the Greek (1964), Shirley Valentine (1989), Captain Correlli's Mandolin (2001) and Mamma Mia! (2008). According to Libbie McQuillan - a senior analyst who conducted a research for the UK Film Council in order to find out about the biggest tourism attracting films - "no-brainer" feel-good films are the biggest tourism-attracting films (McQuillan, 2007). The five films that have had a strong impact on tourism arrivals to Greece, all seem to be feel-good or romantic films where the character of the film has a strong emotional contact with the landscape, which confirms the theory.

The film **'Never on Sunday'** is a feel-good romantic comedy about a prostitute who lives in the port of Piraeus in Greece, and Homer, an American tourist. The film gently submerges the viewer into the Greek culture, including dance, music and language (through the use of subtitles).[1]

The film **'Zorba the Greek'** tells the tale about an Englishman who finds he has a small inheritance on a Greek island. His joyless existence is disturbed when he meets Zorba, a middle aged Greek with a real lust for life. As he discovers the earthy pleasures of Greece, the Englishman finds his view on life changing.[2] In this film the storyline and location are closely interrelated, which is important for a film to attract tourism.

The film **'Shirley Valentine'** is a romantic comedy as well, about a middle-aged Liverpool housewife, who finds herself talking to the wall while she prepares her husband's chip 'n' egg, wondering what happened to her life. When her best friend wins an all-expenses-paid vacation to Greece for two, Shirley begins to see the world, and herself, in a different light. The storyline and location are closely interrelated for this film as well, and the viewer can relate to the character in the film. According to Sirgy and Su (2007) people purchase and use goods or services that have a user image consistent with their own self-image. This means that the greater the match between the destination image and the tourist's ideal self-image, the more likely the tourist will be motivated to visit that destination. In other words, people are motivated to hold a set of beliefs about themselves (a self-concept) and act in ways (e.g., purchase and use goods and services) to reinforce their self-concepts (Sirgy, Lee, Johar, &Tidwell, 2007) Thus, tourists will tend to select a

[1] Pote tin Kyriaki: Never on Sunday, IMDB, available from http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0054198

[2] Alexis Zorbas: Zobra the Greek, IMDB, available from: http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0057831

destination where they can experience their ideal self-image. For example, someone who sees himself as a working hard to make ends meet, may choose to go to a resort with an up market image (Beeton, 2005). It is therefore important that a person can relate to the character of the film. When there is a clear image about the market a country wants to attract, this can be used in the promotional techniques.

In the romantic film **'Captain Corelli's Mandolin'**, an Italian officer falls in love with the daughter of a local Greek doctor during the Second World War. The main characters are Antonio Corelli, an Italian captain, and Pelagia, the daughter of the local physician Dr. Iannis. The characters, storyline and location are very important to each other as well. Captain Corelli's Mandolin takes place on the island of Cephalonia during the Italian and German occupation of World War II.

'Mamma Mia!' the film is another feel-good romantic comedy, where the characters of the film have an emotional relationship with the location.

In order to further discuss the impacts these films had on tourism to Greece, it is important to take a look at the international arrivals. Greece has enjoyed a continuous growth in arrivals, since the early 1950s. But, the international tourist arrivals (See appendix II) for Greece show a clear increase in 1961 after the release of the film 'Never on Sunday' (1960) of 24% from 399,438 in 1960 to 494,191 in 1961 and 597,924 in 1962. The tourism arrivals for Athens (where the film was shot) also show an increase. In 1960 when the film was released tourism arrivals were 164.287 and in 1961 these arrivals grew with 21 percent. In the year 1962 arrivals again grew with 21.5 percent and in 1963 arrivals to Athens grew with 28.5 percent. The year 1965 after the release of the film 'Zorba The Greek' also shows an increase of 29% in 1965. The year 1990 also shows a small increase from of 9% in 1990 after the release of the film 'Shirley Valentine' (1989). After the release of 'Captain Corellis' Mandolin' in 2001, tourist arrivals to Greece show a drop of arrivals of -1% in 2002 and -4% in 2003, but the tourist arrivals to the island of Cephalonia increased by 14-16%. The decrease of total arrivals to Greece is caused by the effects of September 11, 2001 and other possible factors. Unfortunately tourism statistics for the islands of Mykonos and Crete where the other two films took place, were not available because Crete in 1963-1965 and Mykonos in 1988-1990 were not points of entry. *(Helene Katsorche, National Statistical Service of Greece, 2009)*. Of course, there are other factors that also cause the increase or decrease of arrivals, so these arrivals are not solely caused by the films, but according to secondary data and interviews with the Hellenic Film Board, Film Greece and the Greek National Tourism Organization in Amsterdam as well as in Athens these were the films that had major influence on tourism arrivals to Greece.

Table 2: Influence of films on tourism arrivals in Greece

Film	Year	Arrivals	Increase/Decrease
Never on Sunday	1960	399,438	
	1961	494,191	24%
Zorba the Greek	1964	757,495	
	1965	976,125	29%
Shirley Valentine	1989	8,540,962	
	1990	9,310,492	9%
Captain Corelli's Mandolin	2001	14,033,000	
	2002	13,917,000	-1%
Mamma Mia!	2008	18,754,593	
	2009	-	-

Source: Helene Katsorche, National Statistical Service of Greece, 2009

Films as a promotional tool for greece

While there have been studies on the economic effects of film in a region, community or country and the cooperation between cinema and the tourism sector abroad, such studies are rare in Greece. Although it is clear that films contributed to tourists arrivals (the effect of the film ‘Zorba the Greek’ and ‘Never on Sunday’ continues to be strong abroad even today), formal public authorities of tourism have not yet proceed to systematic activities in order to exploit this source of tourism*(Moira&Mylonopulos,2007:73).*

After the success of the film ‘My big fat Greek Wedding’, which was produced by Tom Hanks (who is married to Greek-American Rita Wilson) the National Tourism Organization (GNTO) planned a unique advertising programme in the United States, in order to capitalize on the positive impacts following the success of the film ‘My Big Fat Greek Wedding’. The GNTO placed advertisements in the magazine “Modern Bride” of the Conde Nast Bridal publishing group and distributed 7.2 million DVD’s of the film (free of charge) with the magazine. At the same time a competition was conducted for married couples to win a prize: a trip to Greece and *A Big Fat Greek Wedding* which significantly raised Greece as a tourist destination. Later, in March 2005, the Minister of Tourism announced to create a new institution, the “one stop shop”, where the filmmakers would have direct contact with all the facilities for major films to shoot in Greece *(Koumelis, 2005).* Also at the Cannes Film Festival the slogan *«Film your Myth in Greece»* was presented by the Ministry of Culture. Greece is required to make successful films and set the conditions to attract film production companies to produce similar films that will contribute positively to tourism promotion *(Moira & Mylonopoulos, 2007:73).*

Greece boasts impressive archaeological sites that have long been in demand for both television commercials and films, but strict regulations are laid out by Greek archaeologists. Because of price hikes following the adoption of the euro, Greece has had a hard time competing with neighboring Balkan and eastern European countries which can combine lower production costs with similar landscapes for location shots.

Mr Markos Holevas, director of the Hellenic Film Commission states that in the 1980s, the word in Hollywood was that Greece was an unwelcoming place to shoot a film. “Now there is a desire to change things... the Greek state has realized (the benefits) and wants to promote Greece through film... and Tom Hanks (producer of *Mamma Mia!*) with Rita Wilson (Tom Hanks’ wife) were the first to respond to this policy." *(Hadoulis, 2007).*

In the case of the film ‘Captain Corellis’Mandolin’, the set was totally destroyed after the shooting of the film, and there was nothing left for visitors to see. According to Mr Kavelievatos who owns a photo shop that sells photographs from the making of the film in Cephalonia, not enough was done to promote the filming of Captain Corelli’s Mandolin in Cephalonia. There was no cooperation between the tourism industry the locals and the film industry *(Hudson & Ritsie, 2005).* However, cooperation between the tourism industry and film producers is very important, since the positive impacts of set-jetting tourism can be strengthened (and become more sustainable) by means of the right destination marketing activities (See appendix III).

CASE MAMMA MIA! THE 'MAMMA MIA EFFECT'

This case study will explore the impacts of the film 'Mamma Mia!' on tourism in order to get insight in the promotional opportunities of this specific film, as it is the latest tourism-attracting film that takes place in Greece. The current impacts and promotion of the film are analyzed as well as the influence of 'Mamma Mia!' on the Dutch market (and important market for Greece). Primary data was collected by means of interviewing local travel agents, hotels and residents in Skopelos, Skiathos and Pelion. Secondary data was collected about the impacts of the film as well.

Mamma Mia!

'Mamma Mia!' tells the tale of a young woman who is a bride-to-be and is trying to find her real father. The story is set on the small Greek island Kalokairi (which means "summer" in Greek). On the evening of her wedding she brings three men from her mother's past back to the Greek island they visited over two decades ago, in order to find out who her real father is. *Mamma Mia!* is based on the songs of ABBA.

The film *Mamma Mia!* was shot on three islands in Greece, namely Pelion, Skiathos and Skopelos. Kalokairi, the island in the 'Mamma Mia!' film is actually Skopelos. Skopelos was officially nominated in 1997 as "The Green and Blue Island" from the Biopolitics International Organization (whose aim is to raise awareness of current environmental problems, and to accelerate the implementation of new and more effective approaches to safeguarding the earth for the generations to come). With an area of 95 km², Skopelos is the largest island of the Sporades group of islands. However, Skopelos does not have an airport, so visitors need to fly to Skiathos, then take an hour-long ferry to Skopelos. In 1978 the town of Skopelos was honored by President of Greece Konstantinos Tsatsos as a Traditional Settlement of Outstanding Beauty. This is the Greek equivalent of a site of Outstanding Architectural Inheritance.

The impacts of 'Mamma Mia!' on tourism

Several sources (local hotels/travel agents) bring forward that 'Mamma Mia!' already had a major impact on tourism in Greece. However, there are no tourism statistics available yet at this point. It is still too early to tell the change in arrivals as the film was released in 2008, but according to interviews held with hotels and local travel agents on the islands of Skopelos, Skiathos and Pelion, the interest in the islands have increased since the release of the film 'Mamma Mia!'. The three islands were constantly visited by press at the time of filming (August-September 2007). Journalists from all over the world visited Greece for the international press junket where the actors shared with them - amongst others - the experience of shooting in Greece and being part of "such a great movie". Also, CNN's monthly movie show "The Screening Room" has visited Greece to report on the big musical blockbuster "Mamma Mia!"[3]. The film benefited from this promotion from the international media and the natural landscape of the Aegean Sea, incredible beaches, closed coves, little ports, and green banks of Skopelos were viewed by some 30 million viewers around the world, in 160 cities and in eight languages *(Moira, Mylonopoulos & Kondoudaki, 2009:241).*

Appendix IV gives an overview of films that have grossed over $200,000,000 at the box office during their theatrical runs. All amounts are in USA dollars and only include theatrical box office receipts (movie ticket sales) and do not include video rentals, television rights and other revenues. Here it shows that 'Mamma Mia!' is #42 on the list, and already grossed a total of $601,204,210 which would be impossible to reach with any other form of promotion. As stated before, it is still too early to notice the actual changes in tourism arrivals, but it is clear that 'Mamma Mia!' operates as magnet for Greece. After the release of the film reservations for Skiathos and Skopelos increased by 10% in 2009 *(Markopoulos, 2009).*

But, the first positive changes in tourist traffic to Skopelos were already felt in the summer of 2008. The Mayor of the island reported that the tourist arrivals increased in August by 5% compared to the respective period in 2007. Various entrepreneurs sought to take advantage of the film's popularity, such as the recent opening of a coffee shop with the name 'Mamma Mia' (*(Moira, Mylonopoulos & Kondoudaki, 2009:241-242).*

The mayor of Skopelos, Mr Christos Vasiloudi states that the film *Mamma Mia!* has such an impact that it is called 'The Mamma Mia! Effect'. "People call in all the time asking how they can get to our *Mamma Mia!* paradise." *(Vasiloudi, 2008).*

The Greek National Tourism in cooperation with the Hellenic Association of Travel and Tourism Agencies (HATTA) invited Australian tour operators and journalists to visit Greece, in October 2008. This cooperation was initiated in order to follow the "traces" of the

[3] Hellenic Film Commission Office, "The Screening Room of CNN visits Greece to report on Mamma Mia!", 2009, available from: http://www.hfco.gr/C9A48BD5.en.aspx

movie in search of new tourist destinations in Pelion, Skiathos and Skopelos (*Moira, Mylonopoulos & Kondoudaki, 2009:241).*

According to interviews held with hotels, local travel agents and residents in Skopelos, *Mamma Mia!* already had a clear impact on tourism to Skopelos. Mr Yiannis Chatzitrakosas, creator of SkopelosWeb states that more people are interested in information about the Greek island and many of the people who ask him for information after having seen 'Mamma Mia!' have actually visited Skopelos since. Mr Chatzitrakosas believes Skopelos still remains and will remain a traditional Greek island because it is not well reachable for tourists. *(Interview with Mr Chatzitrakosas, 2009).* This is also what attracted the film producers to shoot in Skopelos. The GoSkopelos team (www.goskopelos.com) also state that *Mamma Mia!* has already shown its influence since a lot more 'new' people have visited the island over the past two years. *(Interview with the GoSkopelos team, 2009)*. However, since there are no statistics available yet it is difficult to get an insight on the actual changes.

'Mamma Mia!' has already surpassed the famous film 'Titanic' to become the highest earning film that was ever released in the United Kingdom. For this reason Skopelos is struggling to keep up with outside interest and odd requests from tourists. A local travel agent, Mahi Drossou, says he had requests from people in England, Hungary, Australia, asking whether they can marry in Skopelos, hold champagne parties or buy land in Skopelos. One English couple wondered if they could book the beach that features in the film for a private wedding *(Drossou, 2008).*

'Mamma Mia!' as a promotional tool

According to interviews held, local travel agents and hotels in Skopelos are not doing much about the promotion of the film and location themselves. Other than the "Mamma Mia café", a couple of posters around the waterfront and websites where you can read about the "Mamma Mia Island", there is no promotional campaign *(Kalina, 2008).* Mr Yiannis Chatzitrakosas (creator of Skopelos Web) says the most important thing is word of mouth publicity. This means that people visit the island and then tell their friends and family about it. Other than that, people talk about the film and when they go on the internet to search for the "Mamma Mia Island" they find out that it is Skopelos that hosts the majority of the Greek shots. It could be said that this is a branding issue, as film tourists are inspired by destination marketing activities. Mr Yiannis Chatzitrakosas used the title Mamma Mia island himself, to promote the island by means of Google ads. He also states that it is not allowed by law to use the title of the film to open up a business or shop, but it can be used as a promotion tool. *(Interview Mr Chatzitrakosas, 2009).* The team of GoSkopelos (www.goskopelos.com) is preparing a great review for *Mamma Mia!* and Skopelos and a series of e-mail marketing will include *Mamma Mia!* references *(Interview GoSkopelos Team, 2009*..

Skopelos also has many small hotels who do not see many influences from the film. Mrs Rodopoulos Paikos (Manager from the Adrina Beach Hotel in Skopelos) states they are a very small hotel with 57 rooms and they have 85% repeaters every year since they began operating in 1992. For this reason their business is not a hotel that will be affected from the 'Mamma Mia!' film or the credit crunch. *(Interview R. Paikos, 2009)*.

Mr Panos Andritsopoulos from the Hotel Association in Skiathos believes 'Mamma Mia!' will help in the promotion of the island and will ultimately attract more tourists. In order to promote 'Mamma Mia!' and the location Skiathos, the municipality of Skiathos takes part in various exhibitions worldwide *(Interview P. Andritsopoulos, 2009).*

Mrs Kostantina Saraidari from Skopelos Weddings would like to spread the holiday season (that means more accommodation, more restaurants, more income for the locals etcetera) and notify tourists that they can do more interesting things such as a sightseeing (there are interesting museums, libraries, many monasteries) and of course getting married and spend their honeymoon in Skopelos. She states that the influence of 'Mamma Mia!' is huge. Skopelos is not so known around the world as Mykonos and Santorini (they are very popular for many reasons). Skopelos belongs to a complex of islands called Sporades (7 of them) and they are blessed by mother nature because it is covered from a variation of trees. Because of the film the reaction was very quick. Many people around the world (Asia, Africa, Australia, USA) are willing and wishing to perform their wedding in Skopelos. Thanks to 'Mamma Mia' the film Skopelos Weddings have many more requests.

Mrs Kostantina Saraidari states that up until now, almost nothing was done about the promotion of the film and the island. Everything just happened very quickly. Not even the website was updated in order to be more informative, with many pictures and locations. Up until now no advantage has been taken of the huge film success. The only way in which the film was used as a promotional tool is that Skopelos Weddings convinced the Mayor of the island to perform civil weddings on the beach, on boats or in private villas, as people are asking for specific locations from the 'Mamma Mia!' scenes. Before 'Mamma Mia!' it was not possible in Greece to perform civil weddings on a boat or on the beach. This was only possible in the City Hall *(Interview K. Saraidari, 2009)*.

The use of filmed material for promotional purposes of the locations it took place (in this case Skiathos, Skopelos and Pelion) is regulated by private agreements between the film-producer and the local authorities. This operation does not require a specific law allowing it to happen. Having said that, in Greece "the Government DOES NOT collaborate with the private sector". So, any and all deals regarding this happen on a "case by case" basis *(Interview C. A. Giotis, 2009)*.

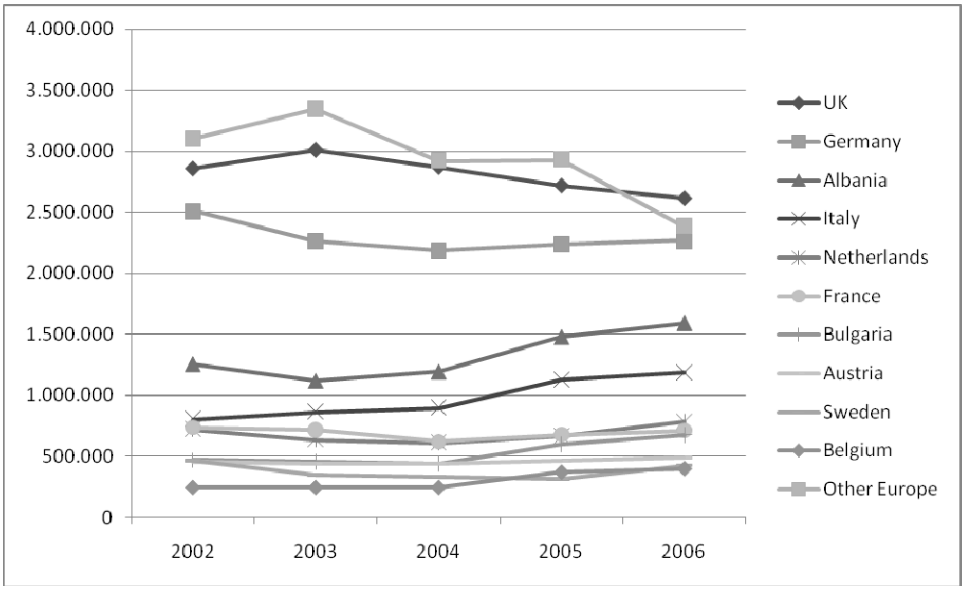
Mr Holevas (Managing Director – Hellenic Film Commission) states that is still too early to know the actual influences of the film 'Mamma Mia!'. However, in general it can be concluded from the above mentioned sources that interest in Greece – and especially Skiathos and Skopelos – has increased.

The 'Mamma Mia!' effect on the Dutch market

The Netherlands is an important market for Greece. More than 84% of all inbound tourists originate in Western and Eastern Europe and in 2006 the Netherlands was number five on the list of leading source markets for inbound arrivals to Greece from Europe. Greece, however, is facing stiff competition from other (and in some cases, lower-priced) destinations (i.e. Turkey) offered by tour operators and, of course, the Internet, which gives consumers a wider choice of holiday hot spots than ever before. Even though Greece enjoys mild temperatures during most of the year, the majority of tourists arrive in the months July and August, when families have time off. Greece is perceived as a sun-sea destination which the government is trying to overcome. They are targeting niche markets (special interest, conventions, seniors), developing new packages and promoting the country as a year-round destination.[4]

[4] "Travel and Tourism – Greece" Mintel International Group Ltd, May 2008

Figure 1: Leading source markets for inbound arrivals to Greece from Europe

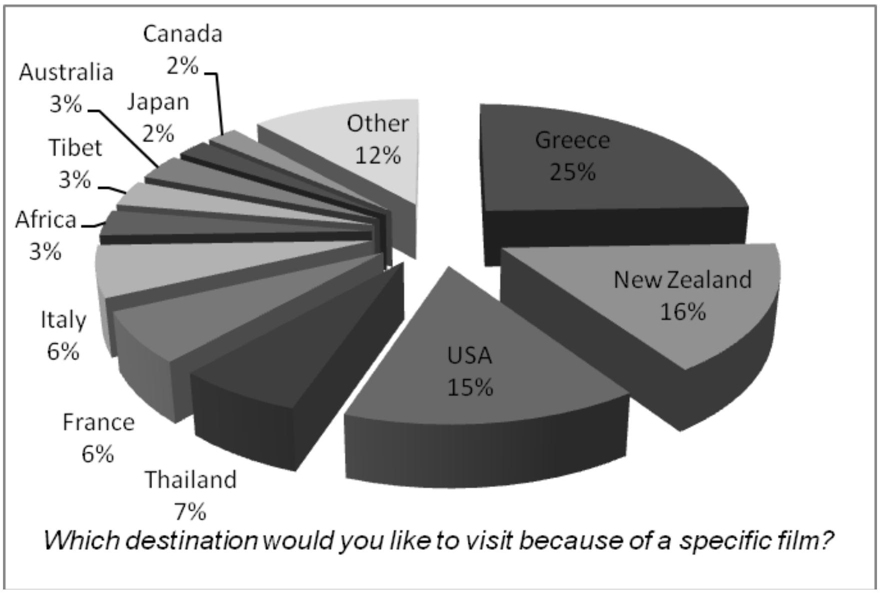


Author: Romy Assadourian, 2009 (Source: UNWTO; National Statistical Service of Greece; Mintel, 2008) Note: for 2002-04, figures have been rounded.

In 2007 Greece was number seven on the list of most visited foreign destinations for The Netherlands *(TNS Nipo)*. In order to get insight in the image the Dutch tourist has from Greece, because of film (and especially the latest film 'Mamma Mia!'), surveys were held with a sample of 108 (potential) tourists between the age of 16 and 70. Next to that, the reasons for visiting a destination because of a specific film were explored. From the 108 respondents, 54 percent was female and 46 percent was male. It must be taken into account though that the surveys were partly distributed amongst 'Mamma Mia fans' via web 2.0 on a social networking website and 61 percent of the respondents did see the film 'Mamma Mia!'. The largest amount of respondents were either between the age of 16-24 (43 percent) or 41-55 (34 percent). This is because the film 'Mamma Mia!' is especially interesting for those two age groups as they can both relate to the story. The first age group of 16-24 can relate to the daughter Sophie (Amanda Seyfried) in the film, and the second age group of 41-55 can relate to mother Donna (Meryl Streep). The reason that web-based surveys were used is because these surveys tend to draw more honest responses than other types of surveys *(Rubin, 2000)*. Besides that, the website that was used for this survey provides statistical results of the survey on a daily basis.

In the first part of the survey the respondents were asked whether they have ever visited a destination because of a specific film they had seen. The reasons for visiting this destination are questioned as well as the destinations they would still like to visit because of a certain film. The second part of the survey continues with questions about the film 'Mamma Mia!' and the associations with the film. The survey then continues with questions about Greece, the image they have and the reasons they would visit the country. The last part of the survey collected personal details about the characteristics of the respondents (sex and age).

Figure 2: Survey results on film destinations



The results from the surveys show that 15 percent of respondents have ever visited a destination because of a specific film they had seen. The countries that were visited by these 15 percent were Thailand, Greece, the USA, Austria, France or New Zealand. Nearly all respondents (84 percent) would like to visit a destination because of a specific film they have seen. It could be said that seeing a film can create stronger emotional attachment to a place, which leads to the intention of further exploration of the destination. With 25 percent, Greece has the largest share of destinations that people would like to visit due to a film, followed by New Zealand with 16 percent and the United States with 15 percent. Though it must be kept in mind that the surveys were partly distributed amongst 'Mamma Mia' fans.

The films that were indicated most as a reason for wanting to visit these countries were *Mamma Mia!*, *The Lord of the Rings, The Beach* and *The Italian Job.*

When respondents were asked for the reasons for wanting to visit this destination because of the film it came to the fore that many respondents seek out destination with an 'extraordinary' landscape which they have seen in film, followed by wanting to follow the footsteps of the actors, the romantic atmosphere of the film and because of the buildings shown in the film. This confirms the theory that films are of increasing importance to a destination. Film is a very strong medium with which people can identify themselves with. Tourists seem to be motivated to visit a destination through both push and pull factors . Next to these factors tourists are inspired by destination marketing activities which show the importance of destination marketing organizations when it comes to promoting a country through film. It seems that "no-brainer" feel good films have the biggest pull for tourists. It is important that the landscape is in the foreground of the film and not just used as a backdrop. Also, the character of the film needs to have a strong emotional relationship with the landscape. Besides this, it is important a film contains "icons". This could be a part of the film, an actor or an object people relate to the location in the film, which they would then like to visit. People need to identify with this icon. A good example of this is the blue door - Hugh Grant's house - in 'Notting Hill' or the Devil's tower national monument in the film 'Close Encounter of the Third Kind'. *(Hudson and Ritchie, 2005; Bolan and Davidson, 2005; Macionis, 2004).*

When looking at the case of the film 'Mamma Mia!' it becomes clear that associations with the film are different between the respondents who did see the film and respondents who did not. The majority of the respondents who actually saw the film could associate it with Greece. However, the ones that did not see the film associated it with either Sweden (because of Abba) or Italy (because of the Italian pronunciation "Mamma Mia". The thoughts that come to mind when respondents think about the film are most of all "fun/happiness", "Abba", "Music/songs", and "Greece". However, it appears that respondents who did see the film mostly associate it with fun and Greece, and respondents who did not associate it with Abba and music. Therefore it could be said that for people to draw the link between the film 'Mamma Mia!' and Greece the tourism board needs to anticipate on the film by developing promotional material aligned with the film. By creating media coverage (potential) tourists who did not see the film could also draw the link between the two and this way more tourists could be attracted.

Figure 3: Reasons on wanting to visit a destination because of film

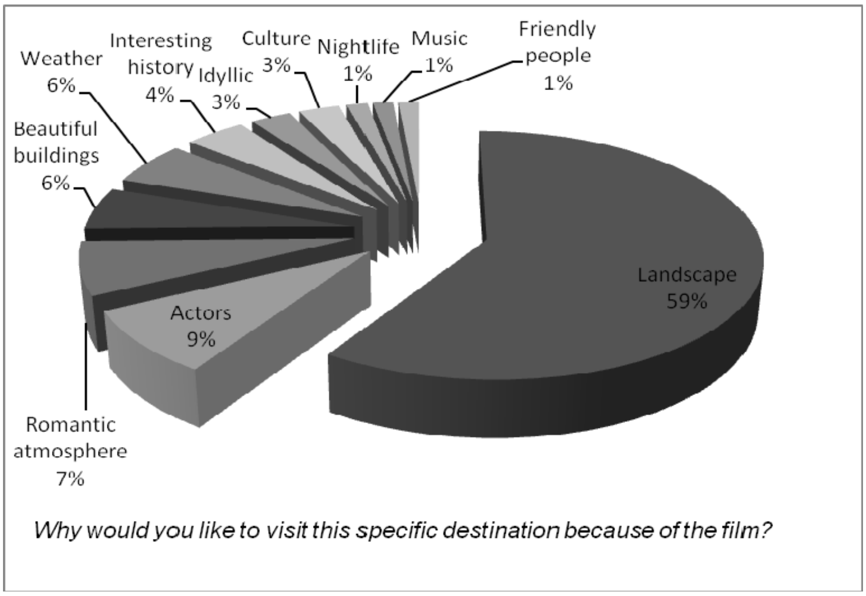
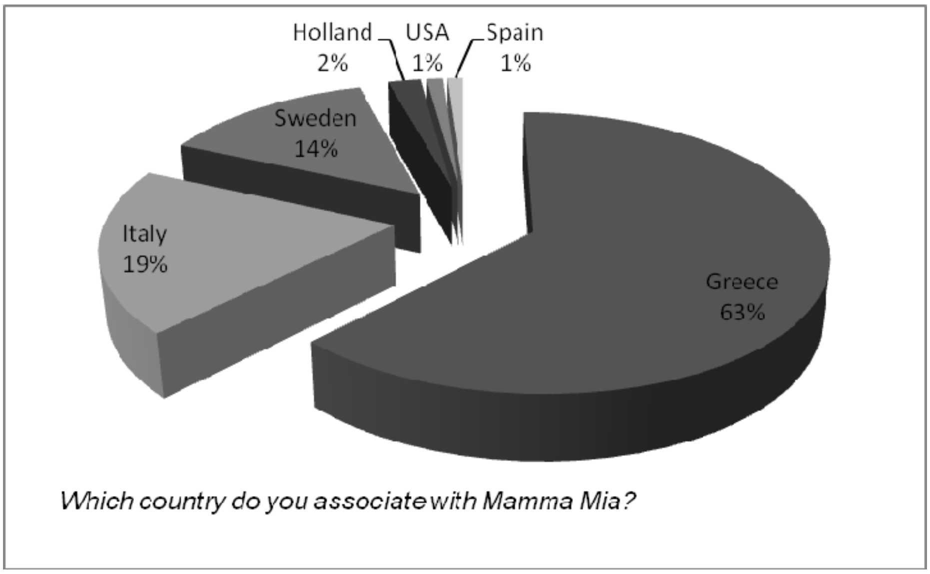
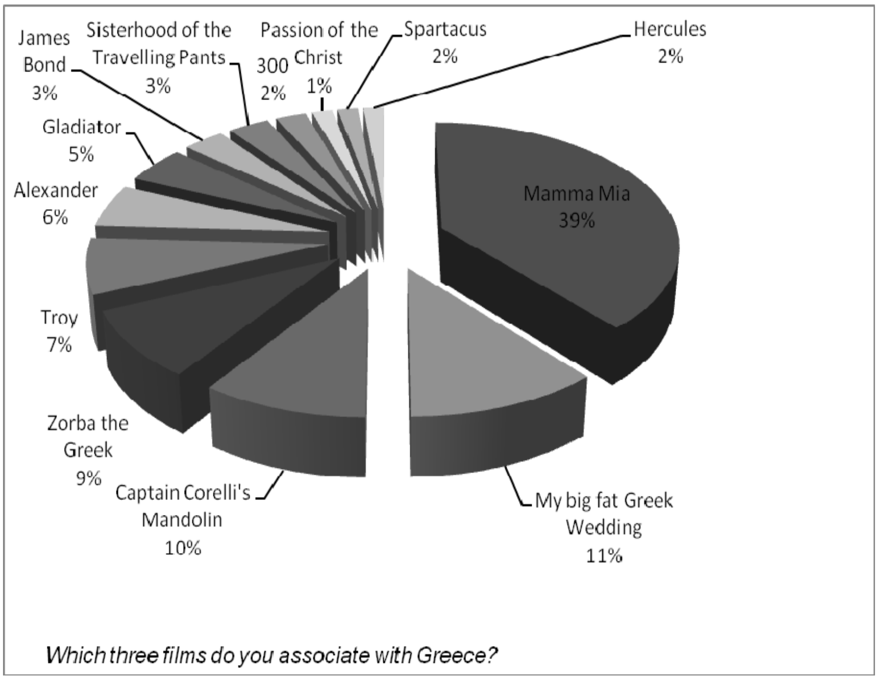


Figure 4: Countries associated with 'Mamma Mia!'



From all respondents, sixty percent know they saw a film that was shot in Greece. When they were asked which film they saw, the following films came to the fore:

Figure 5: Films associated with Greece



When respondents were asked to name three films they associate with Greece, the most named films were 'Mamma Mia!', 'My big fat Greek Wedding', 'Captain Corelli's Mandolin', 'Zorba the Greek', and 'Troy'. What is most significant is that respondents associate Troy, My big fat Greek Wedding, Alexander, 300 and the Gladiator with Greece, even though those films were not shot in Greece. This means that places referred to - but not seen - in a film can still capitalize on the film's imaging power. With the right use of destination marketing activities, the Greek National Tourism Organization could anticipate on these films. When looking at the image respondents have of Greece at this point, sun/sea/beach is what comes up the most. This is followed by "food" and "ancient Greece". It appears that 'Mamma Mia' was only named by two percent of the respondents. Destination marketing is needed in order for this percentage to grow. The main activities respondents did in Greece (from the 54 percent of respondents who have ever been to Greece) are cultural sightseeing (34 percent) and shopping (22 percent). Nineteen percent of respondents mostly did other things, which were mainly relaxing and tanning on the beach, and especially for the age group 16-24 partying and nightlife.

However, it must be taken into account that the activities done in Greece do not per se say anything about the reason they visited Greece. The longer people stay in a destination, the more likely they are to engage in activities that have nothing to do with their reason for visiting the destination in the first place *(McKercher, 2006).* For this reason respondents were asked to name the activities that actually played a role in deciding going to Greece. Results show that the main reason for visiting Greece was for the beach (41 percent) and cultural sightseeing (38 percent). Therefore these are the two main items that should be used in the promotion of films.

Bolan and Davidson (2005) analyzed the influence of media on destination choice of tourists. Here the majority (67 percent) stated that media has been a motivating factor in making their choice of destination. Therefore the 108 Dutch respondents between the age of 16 and 70 were asked the question what induced their interest in Greece. In turned out that tips from family and friends are the most persuasive factor (32 percent), followed by the media with 23 percent. Travel agents were the least influential factor according to this survey. Respondents also indicated that their favorite way of booking a holiday is by arranging everything themselves through the internet (35 percent). The internet is the most popular medium and travel agents seem to have become less important.

Sixty-five percent of respondents would like to visit Greece somewhere between now and four years time, 16 percent would not and 19 percent is not sure yet. It is significant that at this point five percent of respondents who would like to visit Greece says it is because of 'Mamma Mia!' However the main reason for respondents wanting to visit Greece is because they think it is a beautiful country. Since 23 percent of respondents indicated that media induced their interest in Greece it is assumed that together with tips from family and friends this is the main reason for people believing it is a beautiful country. The main reason for respondents not wanting to visit Greece is because they have already been there and would first like to see other countries. Even though there is only so much you can do, a good branding strategy for Greece could ensure repeat visitors.

CONCLUSION

Though Greece's picturesque islands have been used as a backdrop in many films, few of them have served as major film locations. No-brainer feel-good films where the character of the films has a close connection to the landscape, are the biggest tourism-attractors. This can be confirmed when looking at the five films that had the most impact on tourism to Greece. When looking at the results of the survey it can be said that respondents especially are “specific film-tourists” as was described by Macionis (2004): those who specifically seek out places they have seen in film.

Even though the importance of film has been recognized in Greece, formal public authorities have not yet proceeded to systematic steps to actually exploit this type of tourism. The case ‘*Captain Corelli’s Mandolin’* has been a missed chance, because no actions were taken to promote the island after the filming and besides, the whole film set was destroyed afterwards which meant there was nothing left for visitors to see. There was no cooperation between the tourism industry and film industry even though this is very important. The problem with Greece is that they have a hard time competing with neighboring countries due to the production costs and the strict regulations set out by archeologists. Therefore it is not possible (or at least it is difficult) for producers to shoot in every area in Greece. By using the right destination marketing activities/promoting strategies tourism arrivals could be spread out over the season and become more sustainable. However, for the case ‘*Mamma Mia’* which obviously did have a great impact on tourism to Greece and especially the island Skopelos where most of the film was shot, no real promotional activities have taken place by the tourism industry since the release of the film. Skopelos is now struggling to keep up with outside interest, but without promotional activities these impacts will not be long term.

From surveys held with (potential) Dutch tourists between the age of 16 and 70 it can be said that nearly all respondents would like to visit a destination because of a specific film, yet only 15 percent has actually done it. The reasons for such a big gap are unfortunately not clear though. It came to the fore that many respondents seek out destination with an ‘extraordinary’ landscape which they have seen in film, followed by wanting to follow the footsteps of the actors, the romantic atmosphere of the film and because of the buildings shown in the film. Associations with the film are different between the respondents who did see the film and respondents who did not. Respondents who did not see the film could not draw the link between the film and Greece. However, when looking at the image in mind when it comes to Greece, it appears that there is no actual difference noticed between respondents who did and did not see the film. This does not mean that film is useless for Greece however. When respondents were asked if they would like to visit Greece between now and four years time, the majority of respondents who saw the film said yes, as opposed to the respondents who did not see the film. For people to draw the link between the film ‘Mamma Mia!’ and Greece the tourism board needs to anticipate on the film by developing promotional material aligned with the film.

Another result from the survey showed that films associated with Greece are – besides ‘*Mamma Mia!’, ‘Captain Corelli’s Mandolin’,* etcetera, are also ‘*Troy’, ‘Alexander’, ‘300’* and '*My big fat Greek Wedding'* which were not shot in Greece. This means that places referred to - but not seen - in a film can still capitalize on the film's imaging power. With the right use of destination marketing activities, the Greek National Tourism Organization could anticipate on these films. The main items that should be used when promoting films are the beach and cultural buildings as these are the main reasons for people visiting Greece. The results from the survey furthermore indicate that the main reason for people *not* wanting to visit Greece is because they have already been there. Though there is only so much you can do, a good branding strategy for Greece could ensure repeat visitors.

Appendices

Appendix I Visitor arrivals to Cephalonia (1999-2004)

Origin of arrivals	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Austria	2998	2453	3186	2823	2314	2260
Czech Republic	2221	2608	2310	1781	4651	4348
Germany	1664	1008	1050	942	742	–
Ireland	–	–	–	–	2860	3212
Italy	–	–	–	–	132	–
Netherlands	1062	1479	1210	1059	1050	797
Slovenia	563	600	712	756	690	744
Sweden	3909	4589	4271	2863	1762	–
Denmark	1418	3174	1964	–	–	–
Norway	–	1558	1397	–	–	–
Finland	1766	2470	–	–	–	–
United Kingdom	104412	117375	143063	157171	154782	143461
Increase/Decrease	–	**+12.4%**	**+22%**	**+10%**	**(1.52%)**	**(7.31%)**
Other	–	–	–	1328	–	–
TOTAL	120013	137314	159163	168723	168983	154822
Increase/Decrease		+14%	+16%	+6%	+0.15%	(8.88%)

Hudson and Brent Ritchie, 2005

Appendix II: Tourism arrivals Greece 1950 - 2008

Tourism arrivals Greece during the period 1950 - 2008		
YEAR	**ARRIVALS**	**Increase/Decrease**
1950	33,333	-
1951	40,568	22%
1952	68,184	68%
1953	94,410	38%
1954	157,618	67%
1955	195,852	24%
1956	218,301	11%
1957	261,738	20%
1958	276,534	6%
1959	339,802	23%
1960	399,438	18%
1961	494,191	24%
1962	597,924	21%
1963	741,193	24%

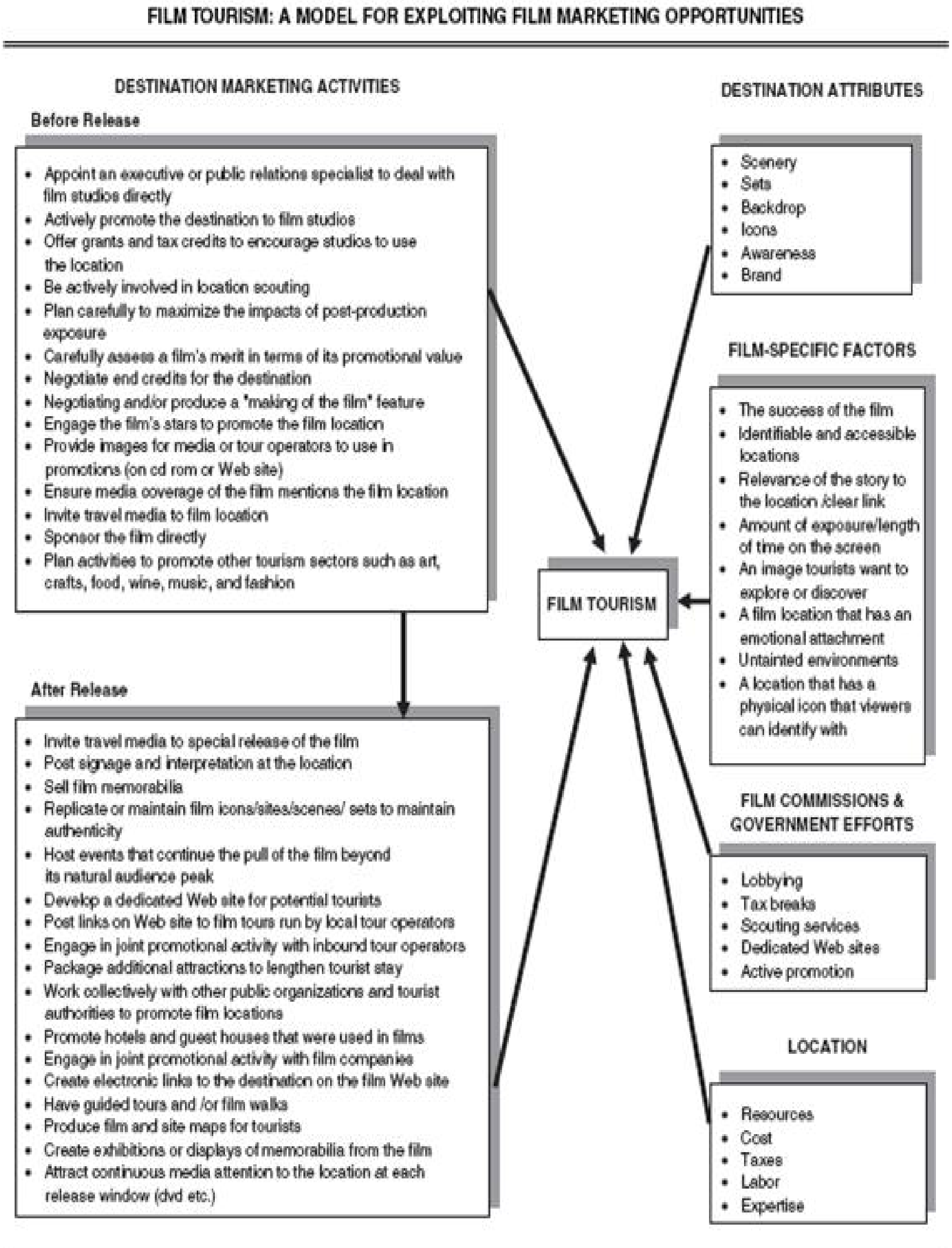
Tourism arrivals Greece during the period 1950 - 2008		
YEAR	**ARRIVALS**	**Increase/Decrease**
1964	757,495	2%
1965	976,125	29%
1966	1,131,730	16%
1967	996,473	-12%
1968	1,017,621	2%
1969	1,305,951	28%
1970	1,609,210	23%
1971	2,257,994	40%
1972	2,731,587	21%
1973	3,177,682	16%
1974	2,188,304	-31%
1975	3,172,968	45%
1976	4,243,563	34%
1977	4,597,354	8%
1978	5,081,033	11%
1979	5,798,360	14%

Tourism arrivals Greece during the period 1950 - 2008		
YEAR	**ARRIVALS**	**Increase/Decrease**
1980	5,271,115	-9%
1981	5,577,109	6%
1982	5,463,060	-2%
1983	5,258,372	-4%
1984	6,027,266	15%
1985	7,039,428	17%
1986	7,339,015	4%
1987	8,053,052	10%
1988	8,351,182	4%
1989	8,540,962	2%
1990	9,310,492	9%
1991	8,271,258	-11%
1992	9,756,012	18%
1993	9,913,267	2%
1994	11,301,722	14%
1995	10,658,114	-6%

Tourism arrivals Greece during the period 1950 - 2008		
YEAR	**ARRIVALS**	**Increase/Decrease**
1996	9,782,061	-8%
1997	10,588,489	8%
1998	11,363,822	7%
1999	10,970,665	-3%
2000	12,500,000	14%
2001	14,033,000	12%
2002	13,917,000	-1%
2003	13,313,000	-4%
2004	14,276,000	7%
2005	15,005,000	5%
2006	16,039,000	7%
2007	17,283,910	8%
2008	18,754,593	9%

Greek National Tourism Organization and National Statistical Service of Greece (Note: for 2000 – 2006 figures have been rounded).

Appendix III: Film tourism: A model for exploiting film marketing opportunities



Simon Hudson and J.R. Brent Ritchie, Promoting Destinations via Film Tourism: An Empirical Identification of Supporting Marketing Initiatives, 2006

Appendix IV : Overview of the world's largest box office films according to worldwide Gross

IMDB, updated 31 March 2009

Number	Film	Year of release	Worldwide gross
1.	Titanic	1997	$1,835,300,000
2.	The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King	2003	$1,129,219,252
3.	Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest	2006	$1,060,332,628
4.	The Dark Knight	2008	$997,316,061
5.	Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone	2001	$968,657,891
6.	Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End	2007	$958,404,152
7.	Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix	2007	$937,000,866
8.	Star Wars: Episode I - The Phantom Menace	1999	$922,379,000
9.	The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers	2002	$921,600,000
10.	Jurassic Park	1993	$919,700,000
11.	Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire	2005	$892,194,397
12.	Spider-Man 3	2007	$885,430,303
13.	Shrek 2	2004	$880,871,036

14.	Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets	2002	$866,300,000
15.	Finding Nemo	2003	$865,000,000
16.	The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring	2001	$860,700,000
17.	Star Wars: Episode III - Revenge of the Sith	2005	$848,462,555
18.	Independence Day	1996	$811,200,000
19.	Spider-Man	2002	$806,700,000
20.	Star Wars	1977	$797,900,000
21.	Shrek the Third	2007	$791,106,665
22.	Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban	2004	$789,458,727
23.	Spider-Man 2	2004	$783,577,893
24.	The Lion King	1994	$783,400,000
25.	Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull	2008	$783,011,114
26.	The Da Vinci Code	2006	$757,236,138
27.	E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial	1982	$756,700,000
28.	The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe	2005	$738,809,845
29.	The Matrix Reloaded	2003	$735,600,000
30.	Transformers	2007	$700,759,914

31.	Forrest Gump	1994	$679,400,000
32.	The Sixth Sense	1999	$661,500,000
33.	Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl	2003	$653,200,000
34.	Star Wars: Episode II - Attack of the Clones	2002	$648,200,000
35.	Kung Fu Panda	2008	$633,395,021
36.	The Incredibles	2004	$624,037,578
37.	Ice Age: The Meltdown	2006	$623,829,763
38.	Hancock	2008	$623,546,274
39.	Ratatouille	2007	$615,935,493
40.	The Lost World: Jurassic Park	1997	$614,300,000
41.	The Passion of the Christ	2004	$604,370,943
42.	Mamma Mia!	2008	$601,204,210
43.	Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa	2008	$591,382,968
44.	War of the Worlds	2005	$591,377,056
45.	Casino Royale	2006	$587,607,184
46.	Men in Black	1997	$587,200,000
47.	I Am Legend	2007	$583,986,216

48.	Star Wars: Episode VI - Return of the Jedi	1983	$572,700,000
49.	Iron Man	2008	$571,827,600

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MODELLING INVESTMENT DECISIONS IN INTELLIGENT SYSTEMS: A SEMANTIC APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

Although the interface/task separation architecture has been a preferred approach in implementing user interfaces for intelligent systems in a business context, little work has been done in application modeling, an essential component of such systems. In this paper, we propose a logic–based approach for representing application modeling; after presenting the theoretical tool for analyzing the resultant dialogue graphs, we provide a semantically adequate basis for implementing this approach, together with the various structural and functional characteristics of a such system. Finally, an example of an application modelling is presented in implementing of simple intelligent system for investment advising and we conclude that this design approach in implementing intelligent interfaces in the context of Knowledge-based Systems , is a simple but powerful one and can be adopted for any single application in that context

Key words: Application modeling, Dialogue networks, Financial modeling.

INTRODUCTION

Managers are faced today with decision-making tasks which require sophisticated computer-based Management Information Systems augmented with ´intelligent´ Decision-support (D.S.S.) and Expert systems (E.S) [16,26]. Although the application of these tools can be of enormous help to the decision-making process, the decision still rests upon the doctor and consequently DSS/ES success is heavily people-dependent.

The User-Interface component is responsible for managing the dialogue between people and application programs by providing the specialized function necessary to handle the interaction. However, in today Knowledge-based Systems , the communication between the user/manager and the various application programs is restricted, either in linguistic form or through the use of windows-based environments (pull-down menus, overlapping windows, etc.)[1,10,24]. This interactional approach is ideal when the manager knows the logical structure of his intended tasks. However, the multiplicity of unique commands provided by the designers, of such systems, in their efforts to reflect each nuance of the system functionality, puts a major obstacle to mastering tasks.

This has as implication the need for adopting a “semantic/cognitive” factors viewpoint [1,2,23], by incorporating semantic [4,21] features of the manager’s view of the task domain. This approach, since it attends to the way in which the manager thinks of the tasks he has to achieve, reflects his view of the task domain in terms of the goals he wants to accomplish. The adoption of this approach, in turn, requires a shift in the design of user interfaces in order to match more naturally with the way the manager conceives his tasks. This can be accomplished by providing, separation capabilities of the particular task to be performed, from the user-interface dialogue management systems.

One of the more interesting questions is how to integrate Intelligent Systems into an existing Management Information System, specifically into a D.S.S., in order to take advantage of the strong points of both the D.S.S. and Expert Systems in the management of business information.

INTERFACE MANAGEMENT AND DESIGN

b1) Task – Dialogue separation

Traditional methodologies for designing and specifying Information Systems have been concentrated upon the decomposition of the application domain into more manageable sub-problems, i.e. Jackson Structured Design [19], S.S.A.D.M [13], Vienna Development Method [20], thus focusing upon implementation issues without addressing usability issues. However, the consideration of applications interfaces requirements [14] results in a different approach to structural decomposition, one that favors the separation of interface aspects from the computational aspects of the application.

It is now generally accepted that the separation of application/task aspects from the user/interface dialogue is a desired objective [14,15], because it permits the change of the system as a result of user experience and the presentation of different views of the application of user with different requirements.

Edmonds [15] proposes that the interactions between a user and a computer-based application can be considered as involving three main processors: a human being, an interface processor and a task processor; further he divides the interface processor into three sub-components:

a presentation system (I/O processes)

a dynamic processor (interaction manager)

a description of the application

This general paradigm of task-dialogue separation has been further refined by Jerrams and Smith [16], who proposed the representation of user-model as a distinct module in the interface processor and by Green [17], who incorporated the application description into what he termed application model, which contains the user's view of the semantics of the application.

The last point (application model) has caused conflicting views between researchers, as whether or not it should incorporate aspects of user-modelling and at the present little work exists on application modelling. Ball and Hays [18] represented all task-specific knowledge in a declarative data-base called "Tool Description" which is accessed via a "User Agent", who establishes what functional capability of the application is required, from the users point of view. Thus, in terms of Edmond's model the Tool Description is an application model and the User Agent is a kind of dynamic processor.

In discussing intelligent front-ends, Probert [20] identified three major components: a user-model, a dialogue-assistant and a system model; the last one plays the role of "road map" to the application and therefore is a kind of application model.

This task-dialogue separation architecture makes the specification user interfaces clearer. Previous user interface specifications have suffered because they lacked an acceptable language for describing the “semantic” of the interface, that is the actions that the system performs in response to the user’s commands. An important element in the effort to incorporate “semantic” features in such an approach is to apply formal specifications techniques. These suggestions are shown in Fig. 1.

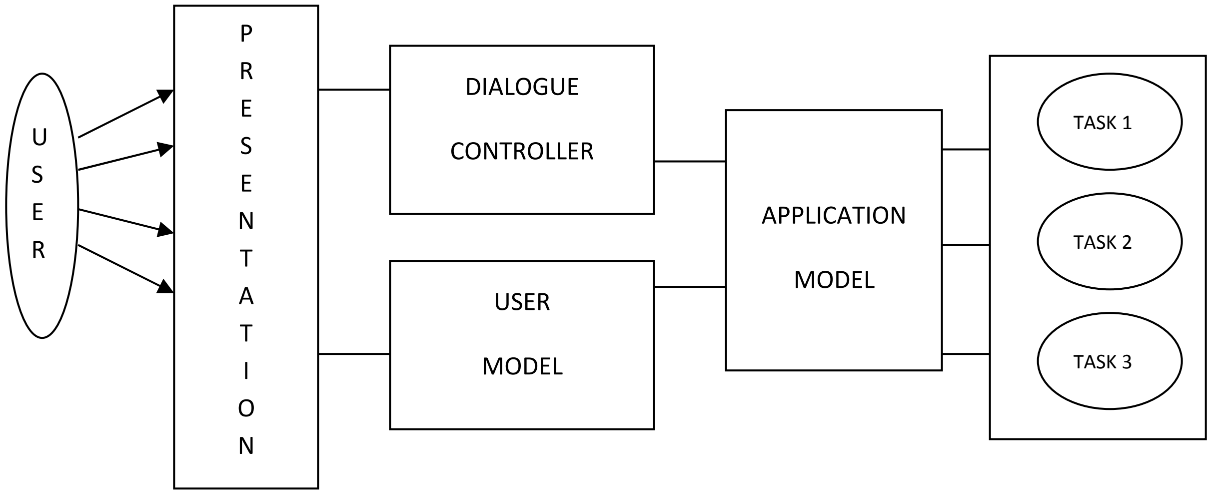

Fig. 1: User Interface Management System

b2) specification formalisms

These techniques have been applied to many aspects of software development [11], permitting the description of external behavior of the system precisely, without having the need to specify its internal implementation. However, despite the fact that the user-interface has been recognized as a critical element of DSS and ES and the need for using formal specification techniques is increasing, such techniques have only rarely been applied to the specification of user-interfaces [10, 23].

SPECIFICATION FORMALISMS

It is advantageous to be able to specify user-interfaces dialogue in an executable specification language; such languages have been based on one of two models: Backus-Naur Form (BNF) [28] and state-transition networks [29]. Each of these models provides a syntax for describing legal streams of user inputs.

The Backus-Naur Form is a well known syntax-directed specification technique which has been used in formalizing programming languages. One general problem that arises with BNF-based techniques is that it is difficult to determine exactly when something will occur. This makes it difficult to specify interactive dialogues. State-transition networks have long been used for dialogue specification. After the early work of Newman (1968), network models have been developed by Parnas (1969, 1971) and Deyert (1977).

The majority of research projects for specifying human-computer interfaces have been concerned with static rather interactive languages. In a static language, an entire text of the input language is present before any processing begins and all the outputs are then produced together in an interactive language. The input can be described as a series of brief texts, where the processing of each input depends on previous inputs. So, in static languages the previous inputs have little if at all effect on the input text, but in interactive languages a specification language must capture not only the systems actions and outputs, but also their sequences with respect to portions of the input.

Network formalism is easily understood and amenable to analysis by using graph theory tools, like path algebras. However, in order to be used for dialogues specifications it has to be modified, to describe – in addition to user inputs – system's actions and their sequence with respect to the input. Each transition is associated with an action and whenever the transition occurs, the system performs the associated action.

Network formalisms have been used in such systems as SYNICS [15], STAG [30], CONNECT [31] and in various Computer-Aided Instructions (C.A.I.) systems [32]. With these projects new features were introduced, among them the most remarkable are the state transition networks hierarchies; these were introduced by Conway and Woods and instead of labeling a state transition arc with a single input token, the transition may be labeled with a term which, in turn, is represented in a separate state – transition diagram. This makes it possible to divide complex diagrams into more manageable pieces.

As an example, illustrating the use of network formalism, we implement in the following diagram the state-transition of a LOGIN command. The notation follows widely used conventions. Each state is represented by a circle. Each transition between two states is depicted as a directed arc. It is labeled with the name of an input token, plus a footnote containing Boolean conditions, system responses and actions. A given state transition will occur if the input token is received and the conditions are satisfied; when the transition occurs, the system displays the response and performs the action.

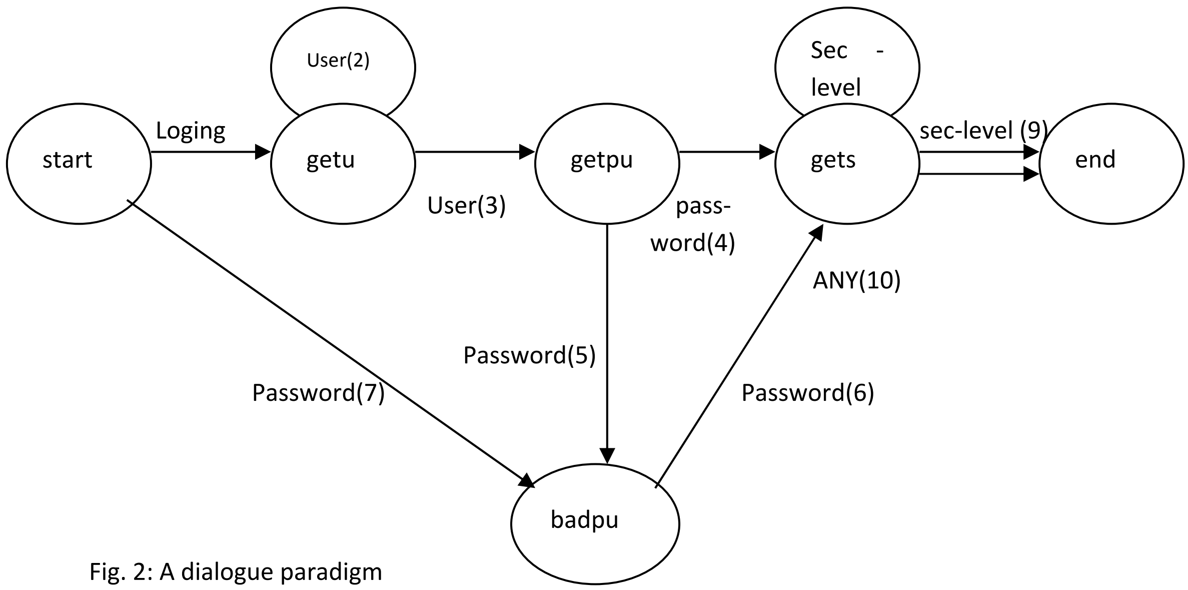

Fig. 2: A dialogue paradigm

The above specification can be represented in text form, which often is more convenient for computer input and output than the graphical diagrams, as follows

S1: INP response "Hello" ⟶ S2

denoting a transition from state S1 to state S2, which expects input token INP and displays response "Hello". Thus, the above network specification, can be written in text form, representation consisting of a list of the transitions that comprise the diagram.

THE SYSTEM

In our case, we adopted the network formalism for representation of the various cognitive actions of the manager during his interaction with the program; however, we augmented the adaptability of the network, by permitting changes in its topology in order to simulate – in addition to user inputs – the system's actions and their sequence with respect to the inputs.

The theoretical tool for analysing the various networks, which are generated, as a result of user's actions, has been borrowed from graph theory and is path algebra [38, 39]. These algebras were first introduced by Carre (1971) and then were applied to a number of path problems. Their value is that they provide a technique for handling the global properties of networks [40] and have been suggested by Alty [41, 42] as powerful tools in assisting interactive-dialogues user-interfaces.

A path algebra is defined as a set P equipped with two binary operators called "dot" and "join" and denoted by "." and ". These operators have the following properties:

the join V operation is idempotent, communitative and associative

xvx= for all xϵP

xvy=yvx for all x,yϵP

(xvy)vz=xv(yvz) for all x,y,zϵP

the dot . operation is associative and distributive over v

(x.y).z=x.(y.z) for all x,y,zϵP

x.(yvz)=(x.y)v(x.z) for all x,y,zϵP

(yvz).x=(y.x)v(z.x)

the set P contains a zero element Ø for all xϵP

and a unit element e such that

e.x=x=x.e for all xϵP

The physical significance, when these algebras will be applied to a dialogue network, is that the set P is the set of possible labels with which the arcs can be labelled. We call this the label language for the network of interest. The join operator (v) tells us how to replace the labels on two arcs connecting the same two nodes by a single label on one arch between the nodes. The dot (.) operator tells us how to replace the labels on two sequential arcs by a single label on a single arc. All the above properties are physically reasonable when applied to dialogue networks.

Carre has described [38] a set of eight path algebras (P1-P8), some of which are particularly useful in dialogue analysis, because, they provide the designer of user interfaces with some key aspects of the networks. Furthermore, because the choice of label and operators is up to the designer this approach gives a very powerful method for analysing networks.

Adaptability of networks topology has been simulated by using the Artificial Intelligence Knowledge Representation formalism, known as “Production Systems”. These systems [9, 34, 35] consist of a set of production rules that modify an existing database, a database, the selection of appropriate rules and the resolution of conflicts that may arise when two or more productions are applicable at the same time. Every rule has the form:

IF <condition> THEN <action>

which, of course can take more sophisticated forms, like:

IF <condition_1> THEN <action_1>

IF <condition_2> THEN <action_2>

IF <condition_N> THEN <action_N>

A typical rule in our system can have a form, like:

IF <at node_13>
AND
<command=…>
AND
<variable=0>
…………………
…………………
THEN <enable switch at node_6 to network C>

An overview of the system is shown below, in Fig. 3.

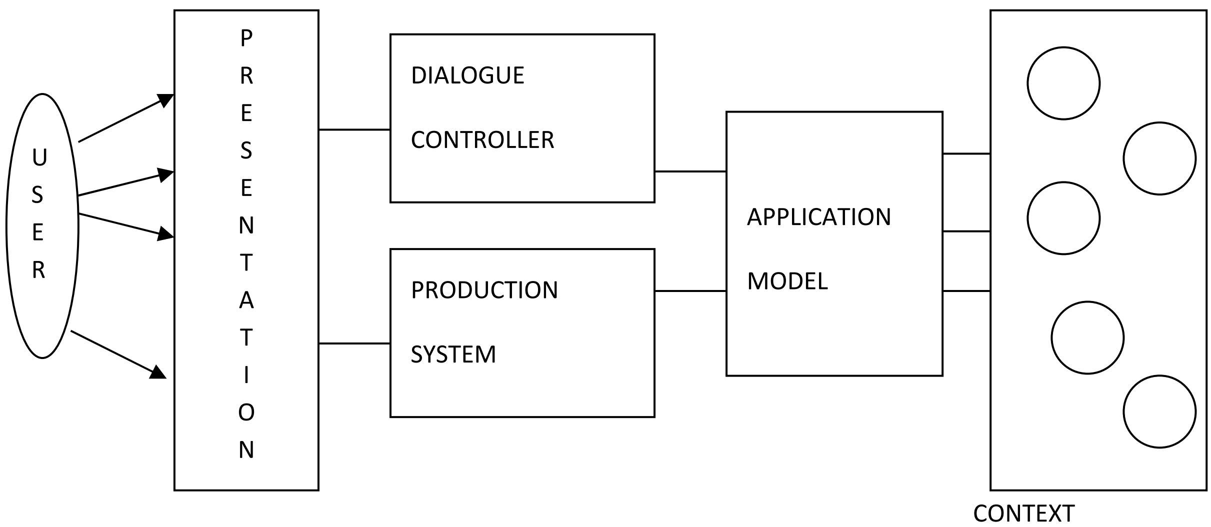

Fig. 3: An overview of the system

The system now can generate the various forms (networks) of interaction between the user/manager and the program, but, now can change their topologies with the aid of the Production System. Of course, these changes can not be ad hoc or random, but are guided by the application model, which represents the expert's view of the various tasks in the context of Investment Modeling and advised all the other components.

The program (application model) operates on the premise that Investing is not difficult if you have some money to start with, if you are willing to take a longer term view and if you avoid constant trading in and out of properties.

The dynamic behind the program's decisions is that two important cycles dominate the business scene. One is succession of expansions and recessions, which is normally called business cycle. The other cycle is marked by predictable changes in interest rates that the Federal Reserve System usually makes in response to the business cycle. This investment strategy maintains that certain sales and purchases almost always are appropriate at various points in the business cycle, so that the only thing difficult is deciding what phase the cycle is in now.

In the following rules, other appropriate strategies are incorporated, together with some factor of probability:

IF short term interest rates peaked recently,

THEN predict peak (ct. 0.4)

IF the market has been rising for months

AND

The public mood is overwhelmingly positive,

THEN predict peak (ct. 0.6)

IF the trend in business loan demand is lower

THEN predict rising phase (ct. 0.6)

IF the IPI ratio is greater than one

AND

The IPI ratio is increasing

THEN predict rising phase (ct. 0.6)

IF short term rates higher than long term rates

THEN predict falling phase (ct.0.7)

IF predict bottom out

AND

you know a stock fund that does well in rising markets

THEN buy stock mutual funds (ct. 0.8)

IF predict falling phase

AND

Predict peak

THEN stay in T-bills and silver, if you have them (ct. 0.8)

IF predict peak

THEN buy silver certificates (ct. 0.9)

IF the dollar has fallen greatly vs. foreign currencies

AND

The dollar's fall is continuing

THEN buy stock mutual funds (ct. 0.5)

CONCLUSIONS

The need of the current generation of DSS/ES to embody a "cognitive" factors viewpoint, reflecting thus manager's view of the task domain, in terms of the goals he may accomplish, had a major impact on the design of the user-interface systems.

In this work we presented a user-interface for DSS/ES in Investment Modeling. By focusing the application context in one particular (Investment Advising) domain, the building of application models (knowledge-bases) would be easier, provided that an expert will be available for knowledge elicitation. These application models – expressing expert's view of the application – can advice all other modules of the system and simplify the interface design.

The various acts of the user/manager during his interaction with the system have been modeled by network diagrams and the changes of the network topology – as a result of user experience – have been performed by using Production Systems, a well known Knowledge Representation formalism. The theoretical tool for analysis of various networks, were Carre's path algebras, whose properties give us great help for overall manipulation of the networks.

The complexity of this graph-based approach is significantly increased when the system is required to be open, allowing continuous acceptance of various tasks in the application domain. However, they allow the construction of better formal specifications for various networks representing interactions, facilitating thus the verification of the system.

Future directions involve, a) the implementation of various user-defined algebras, and b) the Knowledge Acquisition for implementing other application models from an expert, in various modeling tasks [28, 29], with the help of Knowledge Engineers and the use of inductive tools.

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QUALITY -SATISFACTION AND INTENTION OF FAITH IN A CROSS-CULTURAL FESTIVAL

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ABSTRACT

The intercultural festival Cosmopolis is organized at Kavala town (Greece) the last 8 years. It is estimated that 70 thousands people visit it every year. Lee, Petrick and Crompton (2007) suggest that the organizers of festivals must increase the quality in order to earn mach more visitors. The aim of this research was the creation of a valid and reliable instrument to measure the quality of festival Cosmopolis. Additionally, was evaluated the quality of festival Cosmopolis and was examined the relation among perceived quality, total satisfaction and behavioral intension. In order to achieve the aims of this study, an empirical research with the use of structured questionnaire was performed. The final sample size consists of 326 visitors of festival Cosmopolis. The results show the overcoming of expectation of visitor in the quality area and height level of satisfaction and behavioral intension. Additionally, the results support that the perceived quality and total satisfaction are related with the behavioral intension.

Key words: festival Kosmopolis, perceived quality, satisfaction, behavioral intension.

INTRODUCTION

In the frame of benefit of services the interest for the quality constitutes a remarkable research approach, because many researchers have supported that the quality of services is related positively to the maintenance of customers and their faith towards the providing organization (Baker and Crompton, 2000; Zeithaml and Bitner, 2000). At the same time, it is thought that a customer with a positive perception for the quality of the offered services, is most likely to present high levels of satisfaction (Caruana, 2002; Spreng and Chiou, 2002; Spreng and McKoy, 1996; Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Woodside et al., 1989). The satisfaction has also been positively related to the intention of faith towards the supplying organization (Petrick 2004; Choi and Chu 2001; Tam 2000; Dabholkar and Thorpe, 1994).

The cross-cultural festival of Cosmopolis has been organized in Kavala in the summer since 2000. The organizers of the festival believe that they carry out a philosophical-political vision that dominated the Macedonian kings in the 4th century, when it was consolidated that the cultural affinity exceeded the limits that the genealogical relations and the government owned borders placed. In the frame of this festival traditional musical and dancing groups from different countries of world are invited. The events take place mainly in a traditional and picturesque settlement of the city. Other than the music and dances the guest participants present characteristic traditional flavors from their country and also expose and sell to the visitors' different types of popular art. The duration of festival is 5 days and admission is free of charge, while a symbolic price is required to focus on the traditional foods of the participating countries. The organizational institution of the festival is the municipal developmental company which is supported each year by 300 volunteers, while it is visited by 70 thousands people from Kavala and other cities.

The festivals last for short time and are based on a particular subject (Baker and Crompton, 2000). Gursoy et al. (2004), support that the festivals and the special organizations create more social profits, than social costs. Not only the organizers of the festivals but also the rest of the people who provide recreation services, aim to provide high quality experiences and satisfaction that the customers will appreciate as high value. The aim of the organizers is not only for the visitors to the festival to revisit it in the future but also to recommend it in their social circle (Lee et al., 2007).

The construction of quality, as it is conceptually interpreted in the bibliography of services, is focused on the perceived quality. The perceived quality is a type of attitude related, even though it is not always identified, with the satisfaction that results from the comparison of expectations to the perception for the output (Parasuraman et al., 1988). The definition that is adopted in the frame of this work for the quality of services is that of

Parasuraman *et al*. (1988) that supports that: "… *quality of services is the degree of the difference between the pattern expectations of customers from a service and their perception for its output* ".

Kotler (2000) defines the satisfaction as: *"…the feelings of pleasure or disappointment of an individual, which result from the comparison of attribution of a service, in relation to the expectations* ". As it results from the definition, the satisfaction constitutes an interrelation of the perceived output of the service and the expectations of the consumer. The relation of quality and satisfaction is considered not to be linear, because a lot of factors are likely to intervene in it. The relation should strongly be influenced from the personal characteristics of the consumer, such as his/her inclination for variety, the age and/or his income (Homburg and Giering, 2001), as well as from his experience. According to Johnson et al. (1995), the overall satisfaction constitutes an overall evaluation of the consuming experience. Cronin et al. (2000) support that while the perceived quality constitutes a cognitive correspondence in an offered service, the overall satisfaction is a sentimental correspondence based on a drifting opinion of the phenomenon. In the present study the significance of the overall satisfaction is used.

The faith of the consumer to the organization is recognized as a strategic point for the enterprises (Oliver, 1999; Reichheld, 1993). According to Petrick and Sirakaya (2004) the faith of the consumer constitutes a critical orientation towards the organization. Thus, the organization maintains its existing customers, averting them from seeking other organizations. Although there is a lot of disagreement regarding the significance of faith, most researching studies focus on the volitional of nature, in the behavioral intention (Guenzi and Pelloni, 2004). According to Zeithaml et al. (1996) the perceived quality of a service is related to the customer's behavioral intention. The significance of the consumers' faith to an organization, according to Bloemer and Ruyter (1998) and Oliver (1997), is interpreted by two basic structures, the commitment and the consequence. Zeithaml et al. (1996) claim that the favorable behavioral intention includes elements such as the suggestion of the service to others and the smaller sensitivity towards the price. These opinions are used to estimate the behavioral intention in the frame of the present study.

The aim of this study is the creation of a valid and reliable instrument for the measurement of the quality of the festival Cosmopolis. Furthermore, the aim of the study was to estimate the quality of the festival as well as the investigation of the relation between the perceived quality, the overall satisfaction of the visitors and their behavioral intention towards the festival.

MEASURING SERVICE'S QUALITY

There is a big variety of models for the measurement of quality of services in the international bibliography. The best known and widely used tool is the SERVQUAL (Parasuraman et al., 1988), which proposes the appreciation of the quality in the frame of 5 dimensions: reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy and the responsiveness. The reliability refers to the capability of the organization to attribute what it promised with reliability and precision. Safety refers to the knowledge of the personnel that provides the service and in its ability to inspire confidence. Tangibles refer to the natural environment in the frame of which it is offered service, in its equipment, in the accommodations that are provided and to the communication material. The empathy refers to willingness of the employees to personally direct their attention to the customer and finally the responsiveness refers to the willingness of the personnel to help the customers and to offer the services willingly and promptly. The model particularizes the quality estimating the difference between the customers' expectations and their service perception.

SERVQUAL and other models deriving from it, have been used for the measurement of the quality in a variety of sectors of services of recreation such as the hotels (Ingram and Daskalakis, 1999; Oh, 1999), travelling agencies (Luk, 1997), parks (McKay and Crompton, 1990), tourist events and resorts (Bigne et al., 2001), historical destinations (Frochot, 2003) etc.

An other instrument that has been proposed is the CERM CSQ (Howat et al., 1996), that includes the four following dimensions: core term services, staff quality, general facility, secondary services. The core services refer to the organizational dimension, the information, the accuracy of implementation of the program, in the equipment and in the financial value. The staff quality refers to the knowledge and its appearance. The general accommodation refers to the safe parking and to the cleanliness. Finally, the secondary services refer to the allocated food, drinks and to the attention that is given to the children.

MEASURING ORGANIZATION'S QUALITY

Despite the fact that there are many tools for measuring the quality of services, few of them concern the appreciation of the quality of the organizations. The enjoyment and the satisfaction of the visitors of the organizations is formed by a number of interactions of the customers towards the program, the settings, the system management, the personnel, the volunteers, and also the other visitors (Getz, 1997), making the evaluation of the quality a complex and difficult work (Getz et al., 2001).

Festivals include tangible elements, such as food, drinks, and other products that are either sold or provided free of charge, but a service is essential in which are included none materialized experiences of expired duration, in a managing atmosphere. This "empirical" product that is produced and is offered simultaneously is highly heterogenic and it is difficult to be stored or to be checked. Thus, the organizations can be described as neither constant nor standardized services in which knowledge, behavior and contact with their provider constitute critical elements (Bejou et al., 1996). The meaning of service in the organizations has, according to Getz (1997), two aspects. The visitors of the organization is likely to consider the service as a tangible acceptance that is being receive from the personnel or the volunteers, because this transaction is personal, direct and important for the overall experience. However Bateson (1989) supports that a service is a bundle of utilities for their recipient via the experience that is being created for the particular recipient. For this reason, the quality of services should be calculated not only for its tangible but also for the, elements of experience (Getz et al., 2001).

The research studies for the determination of the quality of the festivals are not many. Ralston and Crompton (1988) examined the quality of the services of the Dickens festival (Galveston, Texas) based on the dimensions of: reliability, dauntless, safety, responsibility and correspondence. Their objective was to determine the high and low classification of various parameters, via a range of statements that were presented to the visitors. In their relative work in the same festival Crompton and Lobe (1995) concluded that the tangible dimension was the most important and particularly the atmosphere, the sources of information in the internet, the provided accommodations comforts, the parking and the interaction with the suppliers. However the live implementation was found to be substantially the best for sighted factor in quality. Love and Crompton (1996) once again used Dickens Festival, based on the work of Herzberg (1966), in order to test their hypothesis that certain elements constitute "factors of dissatisfaction" and could decrease the satisfaction of visitors, while some others constitute "factors of satisfaction" and could increase the satisfaction. The "dissatisfies" perhaps promoted the expected level of quality, however did not increase on their own the level of satisfaction. The researchers support that most of the natural elements, such as parking, toilets, and information constituted "factors of dissatisfies", while the atmosphere, the imagination, the excitation, the relaxation, the "ability to escape" and social associations constituted "factors of satisfaction".

DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The 8 year operation of the Cosmopolis festival and the large number of visitors every year allows us to assume that:

H1: The estimation of services of the festival exceeds the expectations of its visitors, while the overall satisfaction and the behavioral intention of its visitors ranges above the average.

Homburg and Giering (2001) note that the relation of quality and satisfaction is considered not to be linear, while Parasuraman et al. (1988) supports that the perceived quality is a type of attitude related, if not always coincide, with the satisfaction. Bloemer and Ruyter (1998) point out that the judgment for the satisfaction of the recipients of services will not essentially lead to their engagement with the organization, which provides the service.

H2: The perceived quality is related positively with the overall satisfaction.

H3. The perceived quality influences positively the behavioral intention.

Bolton and Lemon (1999) suppose that the general satisfaction of the customers has important repercussions in the frequency, with which a service is being used. Halstead (1989) proposes that the real value of estimation of consumer satisfaction is the potentiality, which creates the prediction of consumer's correspondence after the consumption of goods. Hallowell (1996) supports that the differences that exist in the satisfaction that customer perceive, is explained in high percentage by the differences that exist in the behavioral faith (frequency of the use of service). Furthermore, Gremler et al. (2001) point out that the general satisfaction influences positively the intention of customer's faith towards the organization benefit of the service. Kotler (2000) supports that: "*the very satisfied consumers are the least likely to abandon an organism*". The high satisfaction or pleasure creates a sentimental bond with the organization, not only a reasonable preference. The result is the high faith of the consumer to the organization. Consequently it is supposed that:

H4: The overall satisfaction positively influences the behavioral intention.

The relation of quality and satisfaction is considered not to be linear, because a lot of factors intervene in this. The first reason is that, the relation should strongly be influenced by the personal characteristics of the consumer, as his inclination for variety, age of e.t.c (Homburg and Giering, 2001). Consequently it is supposed that:

H5: The age of visitors is related positively with the perceived quality, the overall satisfaction and their behavioral intention.

The relation of quality and satisfaction is weaker when the consumers have smaller experience or even when they do not have clarified opinions, because they proceed in judgments that are not completely processed and consequently are not well informed. Consequently, the judgment for their satisfaction will not lead essentially to their engagement with the organization, which provides the service (Bloemer and Ruyter, 1998). Johnson and Mathews (1997) support that the repeated entanglement with a service possibly increases the expectations of the users from a future entanglement with the particular service. Moreover, the expectations of a user to the services can depend on the level of previous satisfaction that was acquired from the services that were offered by the same organization. This opinion is justified, because the more familiar you are the more expectations you have in a future acceptance of services (Rodringuez del Bosque et al., 2004). Consequently it is supposed that:

H6: The previous experience of visitors is related positively with the perceived quality, the overall satisfaction and their behavioral intention.

Finally a research question is also placed:

E1: Perceived quality, total satisfaction and the behavioral intention depend on the sex of the visitors;

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample and data collection

In order to achieve the objectives of this study a survey was realized with the use of structured questionnaire. The questionnaire is constituted by 51 items divided in three parts which measure the “quality”, the “satisfaction” and the “behavioural intention”. There are also 5 demographic questions and one that measures the number of previous visits. The questionnaires were supplemented by the visitors of Cosmopolis’ festival during their departure of the place where took place the festival. The final sample of the present survey is constituted by 383 individuals who visited the festival of Cosmopolis during the period of summer of 2007 and is considered as representative for a marginal error of 5% (Saunders et al., 2000). The average age of the visitors is more or less 30 years old, while 88,8% was Kavala’s citizens and only 11,2% were citizens of other regions of Greece or abroad. 13.0% of the visitors visited for the first time the festival, while the average number of visits was 3,59.

MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENT

Instrument for measuring the quality

Every festival has its aims and its own particularities (free entry, traditional dishes, types of popular art of other populations) and consequently was appreciated as essential the creation of a new instrument, which match the conditions of specific festival, for measuring the perceived quality.

For this reason were selected variables from previous studies (Lee et al., 2007; De Guzman et al., 2006; Frochot, 2004; Lentell, 2002; Getz et al., 2001; Parasuraman, et al., 1988) compatible with the nature of festival Cosmopolis.

Were added also some variables relevant with corresponding previous instruments fitted however in the specific conditions of festival (e.g estimate for the quality of traditional foods). Thus, was created a base of 43 variables. For the estimation of perceived quality was created a scale of 11 points, that ranges from -5 until + 5. In the centre of the scale is found the 0, which represents the identification of expectations of visitors from the quality of festival with their estimate for this. Prices below zero were considered as low perceived quality, while prices above zero as high perceived quality.

Instrument for measuring the satisfaction and the behavioral intention

For the estimation of overall satisfaction 3 questions were used, as they are proposed by Oliver (1980) and have been used in the past by other researchers (Kouthouris and Alexandris, 2005). For the estimation of behavioural intention were used 5 questions adapted from the work of Zeithaml et al. (1996) which are related with the intention of re-supplying service in the future, with the intention of constitution of service and with the sensitivity of the price. Both the estimation of overall satisfaction and the behavioural intention were recorded in a 5-point Likert scale, where 1: means the entire lack of overall satisfaction or behavioural intention, while 5: represents the absolute overall satisfaction or absolute behavioural intention.

SCALE RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Several tests were performed to establish Content Validity, Construct Validity and Reliability of questionnaire. These tests are needed in order to ensure the appropriateness of the research instrument.

Content Validity refers on the extent to which a measurement reflects the specific intended domain of content (Carmines & Zeller, 1991). To ensure content validity primary a review of the literature on the subject of the study was made and secondly a pilot test in a panel of experts (professors and professionals) was conducted. In our study all the variables were used in similar research and considered to be valid.

The next step in the validation procedure was the construct validity test. The construct validity seeks on agreement between a theoretical concept and a specific measuring device or procedure. We have performed an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) because items from dissimilar studies are used and the structure of the factor model or the emphasised theory is not known or defined a priori.

The extraction of factors was done with the method of Principal Component Analysis using Orhogonal rotation of the axis with the use of Varimax method which is one of the most popular methods of Orthogonal rotation according to Sharma (1996) and Haier *et al.* (1995). In order to test if data are appropriate for factor analysis, Bartlett's test of sphericity was performed. Furthermore, the Measure of Sampling Adequacy (M.S.A.) of Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin (K.M.O.) was used. This is the most popular diagnostic measure and it includes the degree to which some variables belong to the same factor (Sharma, 1996). Sharma (1996) suggests that K.M.O. has to be greater than 0.8. However, degrees over than 0.6 are acceptable. In order to determine the number of factors the criterion of Eigenvalue was used. Factors whose Eigenvalue is over than one are selected. Finally, for the test of significance of variables to the form of factors their loadings were checked. For a sample size of more than 150 individuals a loading more than 0.45 is considered as significant (Haier *et al.*, 1995).

Reliability is one of the most important criteria for evaluating research instruments (Chu and Murrmann, 2006) and refers to the extent to which a variable or a set of variables is consistent in what it is intended to measure (Hair et al., 1995). The test of reliability was done with the use of Cronbach's alpha index which measures the internal consistency among variables. Values of Cronbach's alpha which are greater than 0.7 are considered as valid (Nunnaly, 1978).

Factor analysis for the 43 items of "quality" gave us seven distinctive factors namely "Implementation and Atmosphere", "Correspondence", "Facilitations", "Tangibility" "Reliability", "Safety" and "Information". Three items were deleted because their loadings were less than 0.45.

The results of factor analysis are presented on tables 1 and are very satisfying as they cover the restrictions which were mentioned above.

Table 1. Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis and Reliability Analysis for "Quality".

Factors	**Items**	**Loadings**	**Cronbach's a**
Implementation and atmosphere	Quality of dancing groups	0.533	0.939
	Quality of music and songs	0.545	
	Presentation of unusual things	0.743	
	Quality of new flavours	0.501	
	Presentation of other cultures	0.721	
	Quality of general climate	0.734	
	Quality of traditional costumes	0.796	
	Increase of cultural knowledge	0.690	
	Acquisition of new experiences	0.759	
	Quality of festival's atmosphere	0.748	
	Quality of virtuosity of executants	0.797	

Correspondence	Willing personnel	0.833	0.942
	Polite personnel	0.827	
	Friendly personnel	0.807	
	Experienced personnel	0.727	
	Personnel that answers willing in questions	0.733	
Accommodations	Facility of follow-up the events	0.490	0.893
	Facility of finding of water	0.715	
	Facility of finding of food	0.703	
	Facility of finding of space of repose	0.752	
	Variety of goods of café shop	0.679	
	Prices of goods of café shop	0.694	
Αιτότητα	Quality of manufactures and decoration	0.527	0.885
	Quality of offered types of popular art	0.640	
	Quality of cooking	0.685	
	Quality of traditional dishes	0.719	
	Cleanness of spaces	0.571	

	Quality of spaces of hygiene	0.631	
	Healthy food	0.496	
Reliability	Program just in time	0.807	0.901
	Events in their hour	0.796	
	Not cancellation of events	0.789	
	Observation of promises from organizers	0.639	
Safety	Safety installations	0.575	0.862
	Safety of tour	0.715	
	Safety of access	0.640	
	Safety for the children	0.501	
Informing	Effective publicity	0.567	0.901
	Instructive printed material	0.686	
	Visitors informed for the program	0.630	
K.M.O= 0,922 **Bartlett's test of sphericity = 7796,55** **Sig. = 0,000** **Total Variance Explained = 71,33%**			

A second order factor analysis among the seven factors which are resulted from the first factor analysis gave us one valid and reliable factor namely "perceived quality" (Table 2).

Table 2. Results of Second Order Factor Analysis

Factor	Items	Loadings	Cronbach's a
Perceived Quality	Implementation and Atmosphere	0.823	0.901
	Correspondence	0.774	
	Accommodation	0.787	
	Tangibility	0.850	
	Reliability	0.780	
	Safety	0.813	
	Informing	0.742	

K.M.O= 0,898

Bartlett's test of sphericity = 1426,51

Sig. = 0,000

Total Variance Explained = 63,35%

The 3 items which were used for measuring "overall satisfaction" constitute one factor.

Finally for measuring "behavioral intention" we have used 5 items which gave us one factor.

The results of factor analyses are showed in the tables 3 and 4.

Table 3. Factor Analysis for "Overall Satisfaction"

Factor	Items	Loadings	Cronbach's a
Overall Satisfaction	I am happy for my decision to watch the festival	0.903	0,900
	I do not repent for my decision to watch the festival	0.902	
	I am satisfied from my decision to watch the festival	0.935	
K.M.O= 0,738 **Bartlett's test of sphericity = 716,64** **Sig. = 0,000** **Total Variance Explained = 83,42%**			

Table 4. Factor Analysis for "Behavioral Intention"

Factor	Items	Loadings	Cronbach's a
Behavioral Intention	I intend to recommend the festival in my friends	0.886	
	I intend to revisit the festival next year	0.851	

	I will try to return in the festival	0.869	0,866
	I will inform my acquaintances for the festival	0.890	
	I would pay ticket in order to watch the festival	0.557	
K.M.O= 0,842 **Bartlett's test of sphericity = 1101,87** **Sig. = 0,000** **Total Variance Explained = 68,85%**			

RESULTS

Hypothesis 1

For the test of the first hypothesis were calculated the mean scores and the standard deviations of the seven factors which resulted from the section "quality" (Table 5).

As it results, the estimation of services in all factors exceeds the expectations of festival's visitors. Comparatively, the higher quality is recorded in the factor "Implementation and Atmosphere" (M=2.197, S.D=1.791), while the lower is recorded in the factors of "Accommodations" and "Facilities" (M=.775, S.D=2.209).

The mean score of overall section "quality" is 1.735 with s.d of 1.620, when the identification of expectations with the estimation of service was symbolized with the 0.

The mean score of "overall satisfaction" is 3,929 (S.D=0.918), while the mean score of "behavioral intention" is 3,769 (S.D=0.922). As it results, all the factors of quality and at extension the total perception for the offered services in the festival exceeded the expectations of visitors.

Table 5. Basic Statistics

Factors	Means	Std. Deviation
Implementation and Atmosphere	2,197	1,791
Correspondence	2,259	2,098
Accommodation	0,775	2,209
Απτότητα	1,212	1,805
Reliability	2,025	1,983
Safety	1,527	2,255
Informing	2,025	1,983
Overall Quality	1,735	1,620
Overall Satisfaction	3,939	0,918
Behavioral Intention	3,769	0,922

Hypotheses 2 and 3.

For testing the 2nd and 3rd hypotheses, two regression analyses were performed. As predictor variables, in both analyses, the seven dimensions of "quality" have been used, while as dependent variable in the 1^{st} and in the 2^{nd} regression the "overall satisfaction" and the "behavioral intention" respectively, have been used. We have employed "stepwise" method for obtaining the optimal solution in both regression analyses.

Thus, as we can see in the table 6, from the first "stepwise" regression resulted a model with 3 predictor variables that explains the 35,8% of total variance of "overall satisfaction". The predictor variables which most affect positively the "overall satisfaction" of visitors are "implementation and atmosphere", "safety" and "informing".

Table 6. Regression Analysis

Dependent Variable	Predictor Variables	*β*	*t*	*Sig. t*	*V.I.F*
Overall Satisfaction	**Implementation and Atmosphere**	**0.416**	**6,847**	**.000**	**2,066**
	Safety	**0.145**	**2,823**	**.005**	**1,483**
	Informing	**0.121**	**2,154**	**.032**	**1,771**
R^2 =0**.358,** *F* **= 66,808** *Sig. F* **=0.000** Durbin- Watson **= 1,576**					

The second "stepwise" regression analysis gave us a model with only two predictor variables ("implementation and atmosphere" and "safety") which explain the 36% of the total variance of "overall satisfaction".

The data are appropriate for both regression analyses as the F- statistic is significant and moreover there are not serious problems of autocorrelation (D.W $\approx$ 2) and collinearity (V.I.F < 5).

Table 7. Regression Analysis

Dependent Variable	Predictor Variables	*β*	*t*	*Sig. t*	*V.I.F*
Overall Satisfaction	**Implementation and Atmosphere**	**0.516**	**10,161**	**.000**	**1,457**

	Safety	**0.132**	**2,610**	**.009**	**1,457**
R^2 =0**.360,** *F* **= 102,827** *Sig. F* **=0.000** Durbin- Watson **= 1,705**					

Hypothesis 4.

The test of the 4th hypothesis has been done by the use of regression analysis where the dependent variable was the "behavioral intention' and predictor variable the "overall satisfaction".

Table 8. Regression Analysis

Dependent Variable	Predictor Variables	*β*	*t*	*Sig. t*	*V.I.F*
Behavioral Intention	**Overall Satisfaction**	**0.823**	**28,222**	**.000**	**1,000**
R^2 =**0.677,** *F* **= 796,508** *Sig. F* **=0.000** Durbin- Watson **= 1,998**					

The "overall satisfaction" of visitors explains the 67,7% of the total variation in the "behavioral intention" of visitors and thus can be characterized as a very strong predictor.

Hypotheses 5 and 6.

The hypothesis 5 examines the relationship of the "age" of visitors with "perceived quality", "overall satisfaction" and "behavioral intention" of visitors. We have performed regression analysis where the dependent variables were respectively "perceived quality", "overall satisfaction" and "behavioral intention" while the predictor variable was the "age". All regression analyses gave us insufficient results which do not support the hypothesis.

The hypothesis 6 examines the relationship of the “previous experience” of visitors with “perceived quality”, “overall satisfaction” and “behavioral intention” of visitors. The dependent variables, in the regression analyses, were “perceived quality”, “overall satisfaction” and “behavioral intention” respectively, while the predictor variable was the “previous experience”. The results of regression analyses do not support the hypotheses in this case too.

Research Question

The hypotheses 5 and 6 showed that the “age” and “previous experience” of visitors do not constitute factors affecting the “perceived quality”, “overall satisfaction” and “behavioral intention” of visitors. In order to test if the “sex” of visitors affect the “perceived quality”, “overall satisfaction” and “behavioral intention” we have performed an ANOVA analysis. The results (Table 9) show that the women are more satisfied than the men (Sig. F=0,047<0,05). Also the women present better behavioral intention (Sig. F=0,013<0,05). On the other hand, the difference between women and men in perceived quality is not so clear.

Table 9. ANOVA Analysis for “gender”

Factors	**F**	**Sig.**	**Man**	**Woman**
Perceived Quality	3,146	0,077	1,6	1,9
Overall Satisfaction	3,978	0,047	3,8	4,0
Behavioral Intention	6,187	0,013	3,6	3,9

DISCUSSION- CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this study was to create a valid and reliable instrument to measure the quality of the festival Cosmopolis. An additional aim of this study was to estimate the quality of the festival, the satisfaction and the behavioral intention of its visitors, as well as to investigate the relation between quality, satisfaction and the behavior intention concerning the festival.

An exploratory factor analysis with statistically important results supports the validity of the instrument for the measurement of the perceived quality of the festival. The reliability of the 7 factors that recommend the instrument was checked with Cronbach's Alpha index, and it was found to be satisfactory. The 7 factors also attributed a valid and reliable factor of the 2nd degree. Thus, the instrument is judged suitable for the measurement of the quality of the festival of Cosmopolis.

The measurement of the perceived quality of the festival of Cosmopolis surpassed the expectations of the visitors. The results show a very successful organizational effort. The weak factors were also determined, as for example "facilitations". Equally high to the perceived quality was determined the total satisfaction of visitors as well as their behavioral intention towards the festival.

The height of the perceived quality was related positively with the age of the visitors. That is to say, the older the visitors were the higher the perceived quality of the festival was. This discovery shows that the younger visitors of the festival may have higher expectations to the quality and are stricter critics. Nevertheless, the total satisfaction of the younger individuals and their behavioral intention did not differentiate from the corresponding older in age visitors. The numbers of the previous visits in the festival were related positively to the behavioral intention of its visitors. It appears that the quality of the festival, as well as the satisfaction that the visitors acquire from it is continuously increasing, and consequently is favorably influenced their behavioral intention.

The women visitors of the festival Cosmopolis appear to be more satisfied than the men, as they record higher behavioral intention. However there is no differentiation towards the conceiving quality. It appears that the festivals that include cultural elements, such as dancing, music, the traditional costumes and the traditional cooking are more attractive to the women.

The assessment by the visitors of the quality of the festival appears to be able to interpret the changes of the total satisfaction of the visitors. This discovery is aligned with other precedents, that support the effect of the perceived quality on the satisfaction (Caruana, 2002; Spreng and Chiou, 2002; Alexandris et al., 2001; Spreng and McKoy, 1996; Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Woodside et al., 1989). Still, the results of the research work showed that the perceived quality as well as the total satisfaction can interpret the changes of the behavioral intention in some percentage. This discovery also agrees with other previous ones (Alexandris et al., 2002; Baker and Crompton, 2000; Bloemer et al., 1999; Zeithalm et al., 1996).

However, it was not determined if all factors of quality contribute in predicting the total satisfaction nor in predicting the behavioral intention. The results of the study showed that the prediction of total satisfaction can only emanate from the factors "Implementation and Atmosphere", "Safety" and "Information". At the same time, the prediction of total satisfaction can be realized only from the factor "Implementation and Atmosphere". This virtually means that a big probability exists for someone to visit the festival in the future, if they saw unusual things or if they considered the music and the songs good quality despite the fact it did not create, good impression for the quality, for example, of the areas of hygiene. These findings distinguish, mainly, the importance of the factor "Implementation and Atmosphere" and secondly the factors "Safety" and "Communication". The importance of implementation in the frame of the festival is also indicated by Crompton and Lobe (1995). At the same time, Alexandris et al. (2002) and Zeirhaml and Bitner (2000) underline that the tangible part of the services is considered today requisite and expected and, consequently, does not influence the evaluation and the behavioral intention of the recipients of the relative services.

The factor "Implementation and Atmosphere" appears to reflect to the main motives which make someone visit a festival. Guzman et al. (2006), among other motives in visiting a festival include the cultural exploration, the attractiveness of the organization, the socialization, the originality. Therefore it appears, , that the enjoyment of the music of the songs and dances, the broadening of knowledge for the customs of other cultures, the new experiences, living the atmosphere of a festival and the interaction with other visitors constitute the more important reasons for which someone visits the festival of Cosmopolis. The perception of visitors for high quality of services in those fields influence their satisfaction, but also their intention to advertize the festival to their acquaintances and visit it again in the future. These conclusions comply with the respective ones of Crompton and Lobe (1995).

Finally, it should be pointed out that, despite the recorded perceived quite high quality of the festival and the satisfaction that the visitors acquire from it, they do not appear to be willing to pay in the future for a ticket, to the degree of their intentions to advertize it to their acquaintances or to visit it again. Perhaps, because of this contradiction, the Lee et al. (2007) excluded relative variables at the creation of the factor of behavioral intention.

The conclusions of the present study can resupply the organizers of the festival of Cosmopolis with precious information, which will contribute in the improvement of its quality and in the attendance of more visitors.

This study is subject to certain restrictions. After all each festival has different content than the other and its own particularities, it would be very difficult to use the same instrument of measurement that was used in one festival to another festival.

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STRATEGIC KNOWLEDGE AND ORGANIZATION FOR A HOTEL BUSINESS

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ABSTRACT:

The contribution of tourism in a country's GDP is an important factor of its financial wellbeing and growth. As a result, the attempt to attract tourists must be of high importance for everyone working in the relative area. Lately, a strong Brand is considered to be the most significant factor when a country is trying to attract tourists. Especially in European Union, the first continent as far as tourists arrivals are concerned, there seems to be a coordinated effort. In this paper, all Tourism Brands (slogan and logos) used by EU members are listed as well as the conclusions that are derived, while a special report of the situation and the actions that are taken in Greece, is included.

Key Words: tourism destinations, brand name, marketing, EU countries, logos.

TOURISM CHARACTERISTICS

According to World Tourism Organization's (2008:10) long-term forecast and assessment of the development of tourism "international arrivals are expected to reach nearly 1.6 billion by the year 2020. Of these worldwide arrivals, 1.2 billion will be intraregional and 378 million will be long-haul travellers". By this year, "the top three receiving regions will be Europe (717 million tourists), East Asia and the Pacific (397 million) and the Americas (282 million), followed by Africa, the Middle East and South Asia" (UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, 2006), generating nearly US$2 trillion in economic activity (Vietnam Human Resources Development in Tourism Project, 2008:3) by creating new jobs in hotels and restaurant, in transportation, etc.

These facts describe in numbers why tourism is so important to national economies and why especially in times of economical depression, governments are trying hard to find ways to increase tourist's arrivals and therefore income. It is estimated that 70% of international travellers visit only 10 countries, which means that over 90 National Tourism Organizations have to compete for 30% of total international arrivals (Morgan et. al, 2002:72). As a result, to achieve revenues in the tourism field, organizations (national, non profitable, etc) have turned to the implementation of marketing strategies that will raise tourist's interest in visiting their travel destinations.

Tourism marketing is different than marketing a product as a result of services intangibility. Consequently a different approach is necessary. The main four characteristics of tourism which affect the implementation of marketing are (sharpley, 2006:85):

Perishability: because a service cannot be stored for future purchase.

Heterogeneity/variability: each service product, is unique as it is produced by individuals and it's characteristics vary from time to time.

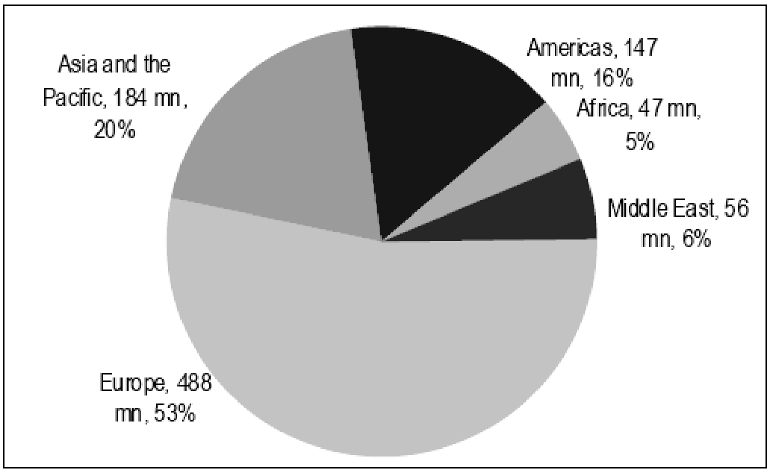
Inseparability: services are produced and consumed at the same time.

Intangibility: services cannot be touched like tangible products or tested before purchase, so it's difficult to convince a tourist to trust you in advance.

Tourism in European Union

The same intense in competition, exists and between the members of European Union, in a continent accounting for over 53% of all international tourist arrivals with the “world’s largest and most mature destination region” (World Tourism Organization, 2008:5).

Diagram 1: World Inbound Tourism: International Tourism Arrivals 2008



Source: World Tourism Organization (2008:3)

The reasons for Europe’s dominance in the world’s tourism system are (Boniface, Cooper, 2005:54):

- The maturity of the region’s economies.
- The rich mosaic of languages, cultural resources and tourist attractions of world calibre.
- The adoption of euro (in most European countries in 2002 which gave tourism a push).
- The proximity between European small countries encourages short international trips.
- Climatic differences that lead tourists from Northern Europe to the southern especially since the 1950s.

– The maturity and high standards of tourism infrastructure combined with the satisfying level of services in tourism sector.

– Funding provided by European governments to tourist authorities gave them an advantage in marketing and development matters.

As a result of the reasons mentioned above, five out of ten european union members are included in the ranking of the “world’s top tourism destinations” (world tourism organization, 2008:5) and six of them in the top ten ranking of the world’s major tourism earners.

Diagram 2

International Tourist Arrivals

Rank		Series[1]	Million 2006	Million 2007*	Change (%) 06/05	Change (%) 07*/06
1	France	TF	78.9	81.9	3.9	3.8
2	Spain	TF	58.2	59.2	4.1	1.7
3	United States	TF	51.0	56.0	3.6	9.8
4	China	TF	49.9	54.7	6.6	9.6
5	Italy	TF	41.1	43.7	12.4	6.3
6	United Kingdom	TF	30.7	30.7	9.3	0.1
7	Germany	TCE	23.5	24.4	10.1	3.9
8	Ukraine	TF	18.9	23.1	7.4	22.1
9	Turkey	TF	18.9	22.2	-6.7	17.6
10	Mexico	TF	21.4	21.4	-2.6	0.3

Diagram 3

International Tourism Receipts							
		US$				Local currencies change (%)	
Rank		Billion		Change (%)			
		2006	2007*	06/05	07*/05	06/05	07*/06
1	United States	85.7	96.7	4.8	12.8	4.8	12.8
2	Spain	51.1	57.8	6.6	13.1	5.6	3.6
3	France	46.3	54.2	5.3	17.0	4.3	7.2
4	Italy	38.1	42.7	7.7	11.9	6.7	2.5
5	China	33.9	41.9	15.9	23.5	15.9	23.5
6	United Kingdom	33.7	37.6	9.8	11.6	8.5	2.7
7	Germany	32.8	36.0	12.4	9.8	11.4	0.6
8	Australia	17.8	22.2	5.8	24.7	7.3	12.2
9	Austria	16.6	18.9	3.7	13.5	2.7	4.0
10	Turkey	16.9	18.5	-7.2	9.7	-7.2	9.7

Source: *World Tourism Organization, (2008)*

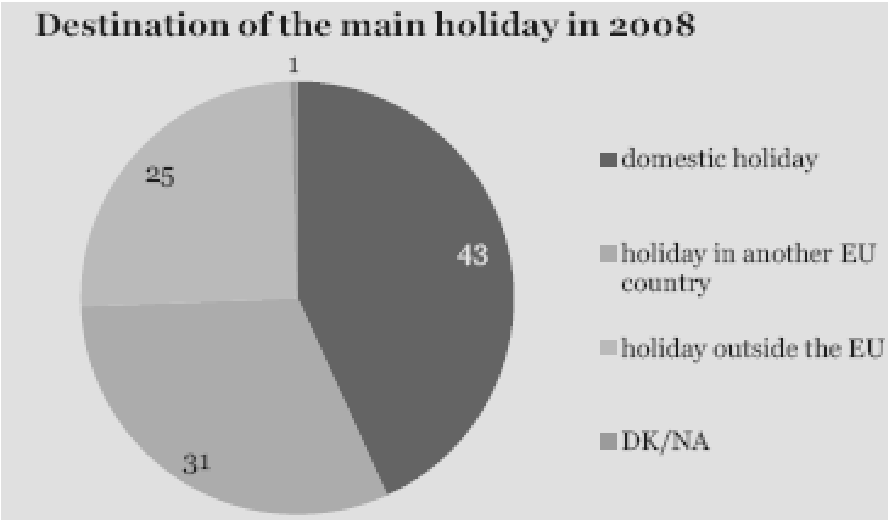
The factors that define the positioning in those lists are not always easy to be controlled from governments and it takes a long lasting effort on their part, to understand what tourists expect from countries and therefore try to offer them.

According to the “survey on the attitudes of europeans towards tourism” (2009), by european commissions barometer, the majority of european union citizens answered that they spent their main vacation in 2008 in their own country (43%). From those who travelled abroad, 31% stayed in europe, preferring [spain (7%), italy (5%), france (4%) and greece (3%)] and 25% travelled outside eu [with most popular destinations turkey (3%), the united states and croatia (both 2%)].

About 54% of europeans stated that they prefer to spend their holidays in conventional or “well-known” tourist destinations, while 28% would rather explore non-traditional, emerging or “less known” destinations. Only 15% of the participants to the survey answered that they had no preference about the type of destination.

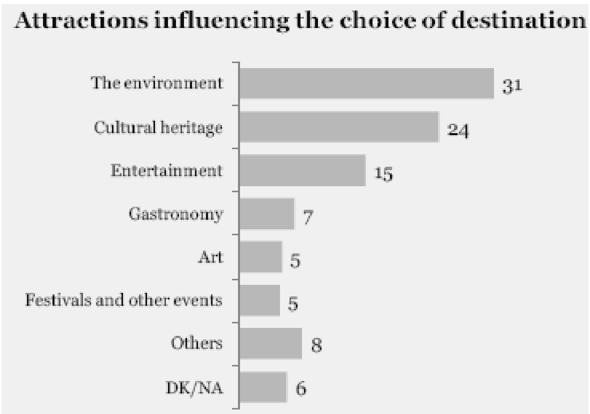
Their choice for visiting a destination was affected by different factors. First of all was the location’s environment (31%), second the cultural heritage (24%) and third the options for entertainment (15%). Other elements that determined their choice were gastronomy (7%), arts (5%), festivals and events (5%).

Diagram 4



Source: European Commissions Eurobarometer, (2009:19)

Diagram 5



Source: European commissions eurobarometer, (2009:47)

The results signify what is important for the european citizen in order to visit a destination and should be immediately considered by relative tourism authorities trying to define their brand identity in order to attract tourists.

Destination marketing

As mentioned above, the choice to travel is directly linked with a specific destination, which means a place “with some form of actual or perceived boundary of an island, political boundaries, or even market-created boundaries…” (kotler, bowen, makens, 2006:726). As suvanatola notes (2002:81), our need for travelling encompasses several reasons, dealing with our daily life. People want to travel so that they can see the attractions, meet new civilizations, entertain themselves and do things different from their daily routine. To choose where they can find those things, is difficult, because of high competition in the tourism field and the dependency in many criteria such as, their income, age, educational level, family condition etc.

To find those people in their countries, to understand what they want and how they will be convinced to decide where to go and get the pleasure they search for, is a job for the marketers of national tourism organizations, destination marketing organizations and other public or private authorities which need to cooperate to achieve their goal. It won’t be easy to persuade potential travellers if you have not tried before to create a safe destination in the inner of the country, to maintain stability and build modern infrastructure and safe transportation means.

When a country comprises all those characteristics and natural beauties, culture monuments, hospitality etc., the best thing to do is to summarize those elements and advertise them to the future visitors. To achieve that, the relative tourism organizations usually deal with marketing tactics known as destination marketing.

That means that an internal and external analysis of the environment must be included, so that useful information about the situation of the destination can be extracted. A SWOT analysis is also necessary to determine destinations strengths and weaknesses that can be corrected by the participants in the procedure (public authorities, residents, etc) and also opportunities to be turned to advantages and threats to be avoided.

The marketing procedure also consists of segmentation and targeting of the potential tourists, in order to apply strategies to specific groups. As Kotler, Haider and Rein note (1993:199), places are responsible not only for the number of tourists they want but also what kind of tourist they want, taking into account their private characteristics as climate, topography, history culture etc. After recording the real condition of a destination (SWOT, environment analysis), a marketer has to particularize the target group. If a country (destination) has cultural monuments which can attract interest, it would be better to focus on this kind of tourists (cultural tourists). But a research is necessary to find out what tourists expect from a specific country, the income they spend, the time spent there, and how all these can be approached (by which means, advertisement, internet, promotion, public relations, etc.).

The next step has to do with positioning. “The common concept used to describe place positioning is the unique selling proposition (USP) and this is employed to create a distinct and positive image of the place in the mind of the target audience” (Avraham, Ketter, 2008:15). To succeed that, a more specific procedure must be followed which has to do with destination branding.

Branding nation’s

Before indicating how european union members deal with their brand names we should explain what that means and how important is nation branding. “a brand is a distinguishing name and/or symbol, (such as a logo, trademark, or package design) intended to identify the goods or services of either one seller or a group of sellers, and to differentiate those goods from those of competitors” (aaker, 1991:7). Usually the term brand includes words and a symbol, while the term “brand name” refers only to the words and the term “brand mark” to the symbol or logo (kolb, 2006:219).

For doyle (1998:172) “a brand image refers to how the target market perceives the brand. A brand identity is the message sent out by the brand through its product form, name, visual signs, advertising etc". According to him the difference between them is that people might have a different image about the brand than that the company is trying to communicate. Usually management in charge for planning the brand’s identity should be very careful with elements and meanings.

In the case of nations, it is important to have a powerful and positive brand because that provides a competitive advantage compared to “rivals”. “the anholt brands index is the first analytical ranking of the world’s nation brands” (anholt, global market insite, 2006:2). It measures how strong a nation’s brand image is, and the way consumers respond to the appeal of the brand. To achieve that, it considers six areas of "national assets", such as tourism, exports, governance, investment and immigration, culture and heritage, people.

To build a strong brand name as a nation means to have a positive image in all those sectors. Of course when the target is to improve a specific sector (as tourism in our case), it is important to see it as part of a bigger plan. That will help a destination have better and long lasting results. Imagine a country not having social stability, with strikes, demonstrations, unemployment. It will be difficult to gain strong brand name, because the first thing that needs to be improved is the inner environment and then an attempt to approach trust of the traveller, must follow.

The principles of place branding

Placebrands[5] have developed a set of Place Branding Principles believed to help places create a useful guide on their branding programme.

However as Szondi (2007:9) notes there are differences between "destination branding" and "country branding", explaining that in the first case the aim "is to attract visitors and boost tourism (inwards direction) while in the second case there is an attempt that "promotes economic, commercial and political interests at home and abroad".

In the study of caldwell and freire (2004:59), where the tried to spot the differences between branding a country, a region and a city, the conclusion showed that the functional diversity of countries make them be perceived by their brand identity, while cities and regions are perceived "more from a functional point of view". Another point of the above mentioned study suggests that when trying to brand a european country throughout the european market the message sent must be characterised by more "representational attributes than functional ones".

Organizations in charge of branding a country such as national tourism organizations or destination marketing organizations, use marketing tools such as public relations, advertisements etc. Internet is supposed to be a key element in the whole procedure,

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[5] Simon Anholt's agency, which helps cities, regions or countries, to become and remain competitive as brands.

which can offer opportunities of building a strong brand name for a country and a "place" to demonstrate that, addressing to millions of people at the same time.

Table 1

1	PURPOSE AND POTENTIAL	Place branding creates value for a city, region or country by aligning the message that the place already sends out, in accordance with a powerful and distinctiv strategic vision; by unlocking the talent of the people who live there and stimulatin investment to reinforce and fulfil this vision; and by creating new, powerful an cost-effective ways to give the place a more effective and memorable voice an enhance its international reputation.
2	TRUTH	Places often suffer from an image which is out of date, unfair, unbalanced, or cliché ridden. It is one of the tasks of place branding to ensure that the true, ful contemporary picture is communicated in a focused and effective way; never t compromise the truth or glamorise it irresponsibly.
3	ASPIRATIONS & BETTERMENT	The place brand needs to present a credible, compelling and sustainable vision fo its future, firmly in the context of our shared future. This will support the overa aim of a real increase in the economic, political, cultural, and social well being of th people who live in the place, whilst contributing in a more than token way to th well being of other people in other places.
4	**Inclusiveness & common good**	Place branding can and should be used for achieving societal, political and economi objectives. Inevitably, a workable strategy will favour certain groups or individual over others, and this creates an inalienable responsibility to ensure that they ar supported in other ways.
5	CREATIVITY & INNOVATION	Place branding should find, release, and help direct the talents and skills of th population, and promote the creative use of these in order to achieve innovation i education, business, government, environment and the arts. Furthermore, onl creativity of the highest order can 'square the circle' of translating the complexity o a place into purposeful, distinctive and effective brand strategy.
6	COMPLEXITY & SIMPLICITY	The reality of places is intricate and often contradictory, yet the essence of effectiv branding is simplicity and directness. It is one of the harder tasks of place brandin to do justice to the richness and diversity of places and their peoples, yet t communicate this to the world in ways which are simple, truthful, motivating appealing and memorable.
7	CONNECTIVITY	Place branding connects people and institutions at home and abroad. The clear an shared sense of purpose which good brand strategy engenders can help unit

		government, the private sector and non-governmental organisations; it stimulates involvement and participation among the population; externally, it helps build strong and positive links to other places and other people.
8	**Things take time**	Place branding is a long-term endeavour. It need not and should not cost more than any place can comfortably afford, but is neither a quick fix nor a short-term campaign. Devising an appropriate place brand strategy and implementing it thoroughly takes time and effort, wisdom and patience; if properly done, the long-term advantages, both tangible and intangible, will outweigh the costs by far.

Source: *Placebrands Ltd, 2009*

Visualisation and symbolism (szondi, 2007:11), is a common way of branding a destination while tourist logos, slogans and other elements of designs are developed. “logos bear either the english name of the country (hungary, serbia, estonia, slovakia, latvia) or the name of the country in its own language (lietuva), as well as national or tourist symbols (sun, sky, sea, flowers, heart, mountains). As far as their colours are concerned the logos usually use the colours of the national flags”.

For dalrymple and parson (2000:133) repeated exposure, advertising and promotion are activities which can help to build brand recognition. Marketers in order to achieve that, can develop slogans or jingles that match the product, logos, symbols, characters and generally do “anything that causes the consumer to experience the brand”. But as kotler and gertner (2002:256) explain “tourism requires image making and branding grounded in the place’s reality”. That means that if you lie about your tourism product, travellers will never come back and they will inform others about their disillusionment.

Implementing in most cases the principles mentioned above, slogans and logos (brands) used by all european union members are:

Table 2: european union countries brands

N.	Country	Slogan	Logo	Site
1	**Austria**	It's got to be Austria		http://www.austria.info/uk/
2	**Belgium**	Fabulous Flanders		http://www.visitflanders.com/
3	**Bulgaria**	Magic Lives Here[6]		http://www.bulgariatravel.org
4	**Cyprus**	Love Cyprus		http://www.visitcyprus.com/
5	**Czech Republic**	Symphony for the Senses		http://www.czechtourism.com
6	**Denmark**	Denmark.Enjoy!		http://www.visitdenmark.com
7	**Estonia**	Estonia. Positively Transforming		http://www.visitestonia.com/

[6] Available from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3oPF9ML2whE. [Accessed 13 July 2009].

8	**Finland**[7]	-	Visit Finland	http://www.visitfinland.com
9	**France**	Rendez-vous en France[8]	France Rendez-vous en France	http://www.franceguide.com
10	**Germany**	Simply Inspiring	Germany The travel destination	http://www.germany-tourism.de/
11	**Greece**	**a)** Greece the true experience **b)** A Masterpiece you can afford[9]	Greece thetrueexperience	http://www.visitgreece.gr/
12	**Hungary**	A Love for Life	Hungary	http://www.hungary.com/
13	**Ireland**	Go where Ireland takes you	Ireland	http://www.discoverireland.com/gb/
14	**Italy**	Italia much more	Italia much more	http://www.enit.it/ http://www.italiamuchmore.com

[7] Finland's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Alexander Stubb, "has appointed a high-level delegation to lead efforts to develop a country brand for Finland... The delegation's term begins on 16 September 2008 and ends on 31 December 2010", so he expects from people to deposit their thoughts about the country, in order to form Finland's brand, available from http://www.nation-branding.info/2008/09/24/branding-finland-2/. [Accessed 29 July 2009].

[8] Available from http://www.eturbonews.com/7035/france-rebrands-itself-keep-no-1-tourism-spot. [Accessed 17 July 2009].

[9] Available from http://www.visitgreece.gr/EmentorImages/File/brochures/sun/en/index.html [Accessed 20 July 2009].

15	**Latvia**	The Land that sings		http://latviatourism.lv
16	**Lithuania**[10]	-		http://www.travel.lt/
17	**Luxembourg**	-		http://www.visitluxembourg.lu
18	**Malta**	The Mediterranean's Best Kept Secret		http://www.visitmalta.com/
19	**Netherlands**[11]	-		http://www.holland.com
20	**Poland**	Poland, the natural choice		http://www.poland.travel
21	**Portugal**	Europe's West Coast		http://www.visitportugal.com
22	**Romania**	The Land of Choice		http://www.romaniatourism.com/

[10] Lithuania has no specific tourism slogan for this year, since the country is celebrating a Millennium of its name and the capital city Vilnius has become the European Capital of Culture in 2009. For the celebration the slogan that will be travelling the world on a commemorative journey - "The Millennium Odyssey" will be "One name – Lithuania". Available from http://lietuva.lt/en/odiseja. [Accessed 17 July 2009].

[11] "For the Netherlands Board of Tourism & Conventions (NBTC), the official tourism promotion organisation in the Netherlands, 'Holland' is the promotional brandname under which the Kingdom of the Netherlands is promoted. In the destination marketing of the Netherlands "Holland" is used, both as text and as logo (with the tulip)", available from

http://www.visiteurope.com/ccm/faq/?nav_cat=1163111&lang=en_GL. [Accessed 13 July 2009].

23	**Slovakia**	Little Big Country		http://www.slovakia.travel/
24	**Slovenia**	I feel Slovenia		http://www.slovenia.info/
25	**Spain**	Smile you are in Spain[12]		http://www.spain.info/
26	**Sweden**	-		http://www.visitsweden.com
27	**United Kingdom**	**a)** Britain be a part of it[13] **b)** See more Britain for less!		http://www.visitbritain.com http://www.uk.britainforless.com/

The results of the above list demonstrate that 22 out of 27 countries have slogans and all of them a logo, proving that branding in tourism is important. Only 5 of them don't use all or some of the colors of their national flag in their logo (Belgium, Finland, Latvia, Netherlands, Slovenia) while 3 of them (Denmark, Sweden and UK) use the flag as part of their logo. There is a direct appeal to emotion in 3 of them by the use of a heart (Cyprus, Denmark, Hungary), and 7 of them also use characteristics of their tourism product such as sun, sea, mountains etc (Cyprus, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Espana).

From the total 27 EU members, 13 use in their slogan the name of the country, emphasizing in that, while their logos also appeal to emotion, promising the visitors to go there and find out.

As we notice, there are countries such as Greece and United Kingdom that have adapted in their brand the economical difficulties of our times. Especially UK and the official

[12] Available from http://www.tourspain.es/en/TURESPANA/. [Accessed 14 July 2009].

[13] Available from http://www.youtube.com/user/VisitBritainTV. [Accessed 22 July 2009].

tourism organization VisitBritain, launched the largest campaign in Europe for the past few years, “Britain for Less” in 18 countries with total budget of £1.8 million, in an effort to attract visitors with less income to spend. At the same time, enterprises dealing with tourism such as easyJet, made an agreement with VisitBritain, to offer low-cost flights in 14 countries[14].

France also launched a new brand in an attempt to rebrand its tourism product, trying to remain in the first place of tourist arrivals ranking. “The logo features a young woman symbolizing Marianne, an allegorical figure and national symbol since the French Revolution, as she looks toward the future. The dreamy tag-line, “Rendez-vous en France,” is designed to seduce visitors to the land of fashion, food and fine wine”[15]. The phrase rendez-vous, is known worldwide and in our minds is connected with romance, creating “a feeling of immediacy to go to France”[16].

One of the biggest competitors of France, Spain, continues to use the same logo since 1982 when Joan Miro designed the sun to symbolize the modernization of Spain on the occasion of the World Soccer Cup (De Vicente, 2004:22) while the slogan “Smile you are in Spain”, is used for the last few years and is supposed to be one of the most successful ones. Through the word smile a more personalized message is transmitted witch implies that the destination is in position of understanding the needs of the travellers and by offering the right product and service, can make them smile (Pot, 2005:41).

Finland realizing the abilities given by a strong brand name has started a campaign since September 2008 which will end on December 2010, expecting from people around the world to express their opinion about the country and Finnish citizens (via a delegation project which is organized by an appointed committee from the Finnish government). Another special case is Sweden with no specific slogan but with a logo showing the flag of the nation. Sweden is supported in maintaining a strong brand by companies as the worldwide known IKEA. The brand IKEA is a powerful league for Sweden as it’s “285 stores in 37 countries feature the blue-and-yellow national colours, serve Swedish meatballs and

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[14] Available from http://www.tourismtrade.org.uk/corporatepress/europevalue.asp. [Accessed 31 July 2009].

[15] Available from http://asiangazette.blogspot.com/2009/01/france-branded-as-no1-tourism.html, [Accessed 31 July 2009].

[16] Available from http://za.franceguide.com/The-New-Face-of-French-Tourism.html?NodeID=1&EditoID=201646. [Accessed 31 July 2009].

sell blond-wood Swedish designs and books about Sweden. To visit IKEA is to visit Sweden" (Wastberg, 2009).

Destination Branding in Greece

Greece has to compete with all European Members in tourism but also countries like Turkey and Egypt, with similarities in their tourism product (sun, sea, culture, etc.). As Chatzidakis points (2008:14) Greek tourism industry faces many challenges due to the world competition and its structural characteristics, so it is necessary to renew and differentiate the Greek tourism product by segmenting markets and specifying promotion activities.

Before the establishment of the Tourism Ministry in 2004 (Law 3270/04, Government Gazette 187/A/11.10.2004), tourism campaigns were not a part of a specific strategic marketing plan. Things changed with the 2004 Olympic Games and the fact that Greece had the opportunity to promote its tourism product and attract visitors who would attend the games and also stay to enjoy country's beauties.

According to Law 3270/2004, article 4, Greek National Tourism Organization has the responsibility to accomplish programs of tourism promotion in Greece and abroad and in order to manage that, can participate in conferences, exhibitions etc. As a result, since 2004, Greek tourism started being more organized in tourism promotion.

Table 2: Slogan & Logos of Greek Tourism 1991- 2008

Chosen by the gods	'91 - '93
Come as a tourist, leave as a friend	'94
Makes your heart beat	'95
Never ending story	'96
The authentic choice	'97-'99
That's life	'00 - '01
Beyond words	'02-'03
Your best time yet	'04
Live Fantasy Imagine Reality	'04
Live your myth in Greece	'04
Live your myth in Greece	'05
Explore your senses	'06
The true experience	'07 - '08

Source: *Drakopoulos (2008:34)*

In 2005 the tourism campaign using the logo "Wonderful Greece" and the slogan "Live your Myth in Greece Starring You" (GNTO, 2005), "sought to cash in on the 'added value' arising from Greece's successful organization of the Athens Olympics, highlighting the quality of services on offer in an environment of absolute safety"[17]. The budget for that campaign was 31.9 million euros for the central advertising campaign and an additional 28 billion euros for subsidiary actions and was launched in 27 countries.

In 2006 tourism campaign "Explore your senses", the Greek Ministry of Tourism and Greek National Tourism Organization (2007), spent 40 million euro[18] to promote Greek tourism in 43 countries in 33 languages (Ministry of Tourism Development, Greek National Tourism Organization, 2007). This year for the first time the Greek Ministry of Tourism signed a contract with strategic consultant for the development (among others) of tourism marketing strategic plan, branding system and crisis management (Stathopoulos, 2006).

In 2007, Greek tourism campaign slogan "Greece the True Experience", aimed to strengthen the country's image as one of world's top tourism destinations by achieving a greater share of the market in the so-called 'creative class', which represented "10 percent of travellers that seek new and true experiences" (Halkiadakis, 2007). For the year 2008 Greece used the same slogan but changed the logo with the name in the middle and 9 circles around it representing, seaside vacations, nautical sports, countryside, culture, health and wellness, luxury, business meetings, touring and city breaks.

The latest tourism campaign launched in 29th of April 2009 by the Tourism Development Minister Costas Markopoulos, maintains the catchphrase "Greece, the True Experience" and given the global economic crisis, is enriched with a new logo "Greece 5000 years old" and a slogan "A Masterpiece you can afford". The new campaign developed by Greek agencies Ashley & Holmes with Karamella, "includes a main (50 sec) movie and 5 theme (20 sec) films promoting sea, religious tourism, gastronomy and city tourism"[19] and will be promoted in 42 countries.

As it is obvious, since 1991, Greece has been changing brand (logos and slogans), almost every year. That means that visitors were confused about the experience the country was offering. As Andreas Markezinis points (2007), "Changing the slogan every year is

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[17] Available from http://www.greekembassy.org/embassy/Content/en/Article.aspx?office=2&folder=712&article=14430 [Accessed 29 July 2009].

[18] Available from http://www.greekembassy.org/Embassy/Content/en/Article.aspx?office=1&folder=19&article=19448, [Accessed 29 July 2009].

[19] Available from http://news.ert.gr/en/21660-ellada-ena-aristourgima-prosito.htm. [Accessed 29 July 2009].

promising different things trying to sell the same thing. Thus it can gain little credibility. Slogans are the epitome of advertising, and slogans must be maintained over time with consistency and persistency. They embody the brand's promise and as such, Greece's officials should stick to it, since Greece promises the same. Greece should discover its positionment and let the slogan circuncidate around it. If the positionment does not change, the slogan should not change either. Doing otherwise is overwriting past efforts".

After four years in a row, Greece is absent from the 2008 Country Brand Index of FutureBrand, which "ranks countries as brands and assesses opportunities, insights and findings related to nation branding" (FutureBrand, 2008). In 2005 when the survey was first released, Greece was in the 6th place of stronger brands. In 2007 took the 7th place and one of the reasons for that loss was the fact that the country couldn't exploit its communicational advantages (Press Attachés Association, Forum on International Communications Policy, 2009). The campaign of 2006 felt "very advertising oriented" (FutureBrand, 2007) and the slogan seemed to be superficial. Once more the fact that every year different campaigns are launched is considered a false tactic.

The fact that there are often changes in Governmental Officers and General Secretaries of the Ministry and National Tourism Organization is also a disadvantage Greece has to overcome in order to build a strong brand and stay competitive in tourism field not only in Europe but worldwide.

In the "Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report" (World Economic Forum, 2009:xvi) for 2009, Greece is ranked 18th in Europe and 24th overall (133 countries), with a stable performance compared with 2008. According to the survey, the country benefits from rich cultural resources (ranked 23rd), excellent health and hygiene (ranked 19th overall) and top-notch tourism infrastructure (5th). The best ranking of Greece is "a very high 3rd in terms of the country's overall prioritization of Travel & Tourism".

Honours like the European Commission-sponsored program "European Destinations of Excellence" (EDEN) to Lesvos for the top sustainable tourism destination in Greece for 2009 (Koumelis, 2009), Ionian Eco Villagers in Zakynthos, being finalist for the Conservation Award category of "Tourism of Tomorrow Awards 2009" by World Travel and Tourism Council (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2009:10), can help Greece in an effort of building a more environmental image, as European travellers seem to be fond of, according to relative surveys.

Greece has to plan and implement a long lasting strategy in tourism, branding the tourist product that has proved to be strong enough to stand all those years despite the numerous changes in logos, slogans, ministers and higher executives. Efforts must immediately begin as global competition is getting more intense and the new members of European Union with similarities in destinations are gaining ground. What must not be forgotten is what Livadas pointed in "Brand Greece" guide (2007:13), of Secretariat General of Communication and Secretariat General of Information. That "Gifted by Nature with a remarkable landscape and by Man with an outstanding Ancient civilization that is as relevant in modern times, Greece has always been loved and admired. In addition, Greece is identified with some of the most powerful brand names in history, such as Democracy, Philosophy or the Olympics".

CONCLUSIONS

Today's competition in tourism sector, has led to the emergence of a new concept, branding, which is widely used by countries in an effort to attract more visitors. Especially within Europe, the continent with most tourism arrivals, where similarities of the tourism product are often and the need for differentiation obvious, all of European Union members are trying to build strong brands.

Brand can be a name, symbol, design or a combination that gives to potential travellers a specific image about a destination and differentiates it from others. Referring to brand name means the use of key words while the term "brand mark" is usually a symbol or a logo.

Branding a country is different than branding a city or a region, so different approaches must be followed. In the first case the approach must deal with the representational attributes of the country, while in the second case (city or a region) the approach must focus mainly in their functionality. Especially when trying to brand a european country throughout the european market the message sent must be followed by this principle, because each nationality perceives another by their brand identity.

Marketing tools are required for that, such as public relations, advertisements etc, which will be used by organizations related to the procedure. Of course internet is the new powerful tool to be used in tourism branding of countries. For better understanding of brand content in tourism, logos present the name of country in english language and sometimes main characteristics that will provoke tourist's interest like sun, sea, mountains, etc, or the flag of the nation. Slogans are also in english so that they can be understood by the majority of potential travellers in the country and appeal to their emotion, by promising a different and of course better experience than any other.

It's not easy to reach a level of a successful branding of a destination, a country or a place. It requires solving serious problems within the country and then turning outside. When attempting to build a brand, it is necessary to know that it takes time and demands real co-ordination between the participants. Tactics of marketing must be followed such as, SWOT analysis, segmentation, targeting, positioning etc, so that it can be decided what a country has to offer and what kind of tourists the country wants to have.

When branding a destination, there must be truth in what you promise, creativity and innovation, purpose and potential, simplicity, aspiration and of course patience, because it takes time. It is very important to remember that branding a country in the tourism sector, means inviting people to join you and share specific things which deal with the destination. When changing the elements mentioned in a brand, tourists are confused and lose their trust in long term.

A typical example of changing brands is Greece. While spending a great amount of money, since 1991 there have been many changes in the branding procedure. The positive side is that since 2004 it has become clear that branding Greece is important for the competition and tourist income. In 2006 a strategic consultant was hired for the development of tourism marketing strategic plan, branding system and crisis management in that direction. Still, frequent changes in Ministers and officials accompanied by different approaches in that topic, make it difficult to create a strong brand for tourists. Greece has to exploit the unique tourism product in order to continue to be competitive.

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TOURISM POTENTIAL AND MARKETING STRATEGIES IN ROMANIAN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

Romania is considered the country which possesses a rich and varied natural touristic resources created by man and this gives a great disposability for tourism. The general secretary of the World Tourism Organization states that: ”Such a country which owns the Danube Delta, the Black Sea, The Bukovina monasteries could live and prosper from tourism only.” Romania has all the natural conditions to become one of the most important European tourism destinations. One of the possible ways of tourism relaunching constitutes the elaboration of some efficient marketing strategies and politics starting from a marketing environment analysis.

Key words: Romanian tourism, marketing strategies, SWOT analysis

1. INTRODUCTION

Ever since the fall of the Ceausescu regime, numerous commentators as well as visitors to Romania have drawn attention to the significant tourist potential which this country ought to have. With mountains, forests, a sea coast, and historic towns, together with a climate which should attract visitors in both summer and winter, Romania ought to be as inspiring for visitors as Austria or Switzerland.

Yet the numbers of foreign tourists continues to be pitifully low, compared with last. Romania's tourist industry performed better under Ceausescu, with charter flights to serve the mountains and Black Sea coast from Western European countries, most of which ceased in the mid 1990s. While a fall in the number of visitors immediately after 1989 was to be expected as many citizens of former Eastern Bloc countries inevitably chose to exercise their new-found freedom to travel to Western Europe, this should have been a short term development, and with an imaginative tourism strategy, Romania could have re-established its position in traditional markets as well as expanding into new ones.

The effort for developing a strategy for using Romania's tourism potential has as a preliminary stage an inventory of the determinants that condition in terms of quantity, quality and circumstance the viability and feasibility of its various components. Establishing the determinants in a realistic fashion ensures a high degree of accuracy in promoting a modern, environmentally-friendly and long-term sustainable tourism. Thus, the Romanian tourism potential can be connected to the European heritage of material, spiritual and aesthetic values.

Like any strategy, the analysis of the activity domain taken into consideration and the final objectives of the estimated changes for a certain period of time are two essential moments of the strategy in the tourism domain.

Without any notable exceptions the Romanian specialists and the foreign ones agree upon the fact that the Romanian tourism potential could compete with the touristic supply of any other country in the world thus significantly contributing to the income growth. Let`s remember that in the 60s Romania was a successful touristic destination especially due to the Black Sea. The regress started with the comunist national isolation. Its fall has not brought the supposed good changes and today the tourism Romanian industry is measured by a series of parametres which explain its peripheral position in international context.

The economic, social and political context of the period after 1990 has not been one that contributed to the Romanian tourism development. Today, the Romanian hospitality industry confronts itself with problems such as: the decline of the internal and external touristic demand, an old touristic product, the low standard in the services which do not satisfy the tourists` expectations, the payment and too high prices compared to the quality of the services, an insufficient promotion. Moreover after 1989 because of the population low income level a restructuration of the consumption priorities took place and this did not favour tourism.

The foreigners` perception upon accommodation, upon prices, is for Romania lower than in the case of Turkey and Greece. They consider that our country is deficitary because of the too high taxes for a reduced range of services.

One of the reasons of the touristic demand decrease is the Romanian hotel keepers` tendency to increase the price of the services when the number of clients become less. Generally the Romanian tourism managers not often proceed to cost analyses or market research.

Moreover, the visa elimination for the Romanians who travel in the European Union countries – starting with January the1st 2007 – implies the destination modifications preferred by the Romanians.

2. TOURISM POTENTIAL AND MARKET IN ROMANIA

Romania is located at the Eastern border of the European Union and offers a tourism potential that is especially attractive, considering at least the following arguments:

- the Romanian tourism potential represents – for the majority of Western tourists – a great unknown, something that is less talked about, due mainly to, on the one hand, the names in sports, art, music and literature that have brought us fame, and, on the other hand, to the less desirable „fame” brought to us by beggars, prostitutes and the gangs that rob banks and cause trouble abroad. Can this perception change? There is only one answer: YES! Change can be brought about through an effort of thinking and through will to act, through establishing feasible objectives and persevering in the actual realisation of the actions initiated. We can offer originality through the tourism products we are so accustomed with as not to appreciate them to their full potential, but which foreigners discover and value greatly, by which they are pleasantly surprised and on the subject which they drew our attention to the fact that we have treasures we don't know about and we don't know how to make them known to the rest of the world. In order to move out of the strictly theoretical, I would like to point to a few of the jewels Romanian tourism has, but is not promoting properly:

- the most densely inhabited mountains in Europe, which can be visited year-round, with a less polluted environment, but in danger of being degraded by the unchecked and irrational exploitation of sub-alpine forests;

- the country with the most mineral water sources with exceptional therapeutic properties;

- an area with endemic natural environment, century-old forests, caves and salt mines, areas with naturally ionised air – very rare in Europe – hills with potential for turning into ski slopes, renowned vineyards, original folklore and diversity in ethnography etc.

The international touristic demand registered a diminuation tendency due to some causes such as the relatively low level of the touristic services, the touristic program nondiversification, the reduced amusement possibilities. The official satisfactions regarding the *external touristic circulation* offer data whose relevance is relative as they register also the persons who practice frontier traffic .

In the future it is believed the number of the foreign tourists will rise due to adheration to OTAN but also because Romania is considered an attractive country. This is very important if we take into account the general situation on the tourism international market, in the case of Middle East for example the situation is different.

We consider that as far as the Romanian hospitality industry is concerned is the elaboration of some marketing strategies to contribute to the internal market flourishment.

As far as the internal market is concerned we can notice a *migration tendency of the touristic demand towards the touristic products import* which reflects the spectacular growth of the number of voyages made by the Romanian tourists abroad. Here we must draw the attention towards the “pseudotourists” proliferation, that is of those persons who travel abroad with purposes which are connected to their jobs and who actually cannot be considered tourists at all!

Balneary tourism

The movements and evolution trends of the balneary tourism, which appeared on international level show the directions of development for this type of tourism in Romania. The splendour and diversity of natural therapeutic factors that can be transformed according to the requests of the European Community Standards are the main favourable elements for the Romanian watering places development. The penetration on new markets, the extension of the touristic treatment offer for the people with low income and the perpetuation of the „Tourism for Health" programme are the main strategic actions which aims at the revival of the balneary tourism.

In what concerns the balneary potential, Romania possesses certain particularities of great touristic interest:

- The presence of all types of resources comprised in the category of the therapeutic minerals: non-thermal and thermal waters, therapeutic oozes and gases, the water of salty lakes and the sea, the saline climate of the subterraneous voids (see the attached map);
- The existence of the therapeutic minerals considered exceptions of nature. There stand out the choke damp gases whose high therapeutic value determined by large specialty research render them specific items of great interest to the Romanian balneology. In the case of the choke damp gases it has been specified that there are few resorts in the world where the natural factors (choke damps associated with mineral waters) meet the qualities required for the treatment of such a diversified range of diseases, especially of the cardiovascular ones. One may also include in this group the water of the therapeutic lakes and peloids that are present in few placed in Europe, yet whose curative value has been internationally acknowledged since the 19^{th} century, along with the use, for the first time in our country, of such substances in balneary purpose (at Balta Alba). One may also add to this group the therapeutic salt mines, less spread over Europe, but highly efficient in treating some respiratory diseases.
- The existence of the geological reserves of therapeutic minerals, which allows a large capitalization of the same;
- The high curative value of the balneary minerals.

The investment process started pursuant to the re-arrangement system of the new patronage, noticing a general tendency of growth of the annual investments amount, an amount showing the effort put up by the companies in order to modernize the balneary tourism structures, especially at the beginning of the new millennia.

The installation over the last years of a large revamping process of the treatment bases and their endowment with specific devices for balneary treatments ensures the transgression of the names of the resorts beyond the national borders. The attraction some balneary resorts started enjoying reflects the capacity of changing the view of the tourists, the adhesion to the idea of prophylaxis by balneoclimatology and not calling for it after the disease has already installed.

The situation at the level of the resorts concerning the built fund indicates the cohabitation of two hotel models, the old one having large dimensions and the new one with reduced dimensions regarding room number (below 40 rooms – like apartments, double or single rooms), appearing as a conglomerate of services in the context of the new orientations

(treatment and maintenance structures – kineto-therapy, electrotherapy, massage, sauna, fitness room; public food structures, leisure structures – tennis, basketball fields, open swimming pool). By the space-organizing manner, by the variety and quality of services, sojourn tourism, which is addressed to family, is also encouraged. Hotels must become attractive and viable both for the population of Romania as well as for foreigners, always seeking solutions and formulae in the tendency to reintegrate Romanian balneoclimatic resorts in the international tourism circuits.

It would be desirable for us too that in the countries with tradition, to maintain the atmosphere of the balneary cities having specific architecture, and the new constructions to be accepted to the extent they are really necessary and if they match the existing architectural style. It seems that resorts such as Vatra Dornei, Olăneşti and Băile Herculane lost of the old charm, appearing as a sort of kitsch.

The creation of the development regions in the territorial structures has offered the possibility to some programmes and strategies through which tourists hold an increased role in highlighting national valences.

The application of the measures on short and medium term issued by the authorized entities targeting the revival of the balneary tourism shall ensure a significant increase of the demand for this type of tourism both internally and internationally. We mention some of them: arrangement and equipping to European touristic standards of some pilot resorts representative for the Romanian offer - Băile Herculane, Băile Felix, Covasna, Slănic Moldova, Olăneşti, Sovata, Mangalia et al.; reintroduction in the domestic touristic circuit of some local interest resorts, along with their revamping and development; technological renewal of the treatment bases, revamping and increase of the degree of comfort of the reception structures; extension of the arrangements and specific and general leisure endowments; diversification of the prophylactic cures and treatment procedures based on the natural factors in the main balneo-touristic resorts and the extension of the maintenance treatments (antistress, fitness, coming back to shape, embellishment, banting etc.).

Balneary tourism may become the tramp card of Romanian economy by ensuring the stagnation premise of the decline from the beginning of the lade decade of the 20^{th} century and by the evolving revival under new concepts and orientations, on the basis of the richness and diversity of natural therapeutic factors. The natural, rich and various balneary potential, complemented by the improvement of the political and economic context optimum and necessary, may maintain Romania's prestige as to this aspect.

3. MARKETING STRATEGIES IN ROMANIAN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

The adopted marketing strategies must presuppose regaining the touristic market which has been lost in 1980-1989: Germany, France, Belgium, Holland, USA, Canada etc. Nowadays the major touristic reasons which attract the foreign tourists in Romania are The Black Sea, The Carpathians, bussiness activities, cultural-historical circuits (such as the monasteries from Bukovina).

Without any fiscal facilities, without an aggressive provocation, without quality services, without a modern infrastructure, the Romanian tourism remains a perpetual chance. It is certain that for Romania tourism represents a great opportunity which must be exploited at the beginning of the third millenium.

One of the possible ways of tourism relaunching constitutes the elaboration of some efficient marketing strategies and politics starting from a marketing environment analysis. This must presuppose:

- the rise of the services quality level offered to tourists especially for the services where it is required their diversification;

- the enlargement of the Romanian tourism agencies supplies in order to succeed in drawing the attention of a greater number of tourists; this is how the focus will be on the introduction or the conception of some touristic products to correspond to the motivational tourist profile;
- redimensioning the connection between the service quality and their price such as to be justified all the taxes;
- the intensification of the touristic products and actions of service promotion choosing modern ways to promote like the Internet; this is how the possibility of tourists information on the touristic services is created.

Unfortunately, as a Horwath British firm specialized in consultancy has pointed out, Romania is for the foreign tourists "an expired touristic product, an inadequate offer for time spending, which reflects the lack of investment."(Nedelea, 2003)Thus Romania has reached an expensive touristic destination.

The National Authority of Tourism has established a series of *strategical objectives at the national level*:

- the improvement and the touristic product consolidation in those areas, stations, localities, which are the most familiar for the Romanian and foreign tourists and where there is already a certain structure;
- the development and modernization of the touristic product in such a way that Romania would distinguish itself from another countries;
- the rise of the standard level of services in accordance to the touristic category and the used payment.

Therefore we can adopt four main types strategies of the Romanian touristic product:

I. As far as the *differentiation strategy* is concerned we believe that it is recommended to have as a starting point the originality through which the Romanian tourism must be characterized without being able to compete with the experienced countries. In order to confer originality to the touristic products we recommend the combination of the circuits and sejours in the mountain area with those from the Danube Delta, Bukovina, Maramureş, the Black Sea, the balneoclimatelic stations, the center of Transylvania, the monasteries area in the north of Oltenia etc.

II. Adopting a *diversification strategy* in the hospitality industry in Romania presupposes the demand satisfaction of more tourist segments by conceiving some varied touristic activities and forms. If we take into consideration the varied and complex character of the native touristic potential we consider that the following could be particular touristic products: the seaside sejour, the mountain and cultural circuits the rural tourism, ecotourism(the green tourism), the bussiness tourism, the sports practising tourism, and other sports and activities, the scientific tourism etc.

III. As far as *the quality growth strategy* we could mention the existence of *the Q Mark Application National Program* which has criteria allowing the full quality measure and of all factors which can assure a high degree of client satisfaction.

The recommended system has in view the valorification of some associations from the hospitality industry to promote quality marks. In order to become members of such an association the operator should respect a certain quality standard. The association will have to respect a certain quality standard. Its members will own a quality mark which will certify the existence of a certain standard. That association will also have the role to promote this mark and the touristic structures.

Table- 1: Tourism in Romania

Type of tourism	**Short presentation**
Black Sea Coast	Accommodation structures represent 40% of the entire accommodation offer in Romania, and this type of tourism represents 25% of the total request. Most of the buildings here are built in the early ‘70s.
Tourism for treatment and wellness	Romania has over 70 watering areas, 20 destined to international tourism. The international request decreased in the past few years and the standards are also insufficient for international markets (except for some new spa and wellness centers as Bazna)
Winter sports tourism	The most well known tourism areas for winter sports are Poiana Brasov (Brasov),

Type of tourism	Short presentation
	Sinaia/Platoul Bucegi (Prahova, Dimbovita), Busteni/Babele (Prahova, Dimbovita) and Pestera/Padina (Dimbovita). As second important areas, mostly visited by Romanian tourists, we mention: Stina de Vale (Bihor), Borsa (Maramures), Semenic and Muntele Mic (Caras Severin), Pältinis and Bilea Nord (Sibiu), Predeal (Brasov) and Lacu Rosu (Harghita).
Mass tourism / road trips to main cultural attractions (organized through tour operators from Romania or abroad)	The main themes promoted for foreign tourists are: cultural tourism, pilgrimage (monasteries from Neamt and Suceava counties). These destinations are included in itinerant trips that depart from Bucharest, the Black Sea Coast or Transylvania (to the cities and to the fortified churches).
Business tourism	Bucharest has the best infrastructure for this kind of programs that combine the business activity (events, seminars, conferences) with tourism.
Active tourism (off road, hunting and fishing, trekking, mountain biking etc.)	Most of active tourism programs are organized in the mountains and the Danube Delta.

Romania has all the natural conditions to become one of the most important European tourism destinations. The most visited regions are: the Black Sea Coast, Bucharest, Prahova Valley (Sinaia, Busteni, Azuga, Predeal), Poiana Brasov, Moldavia and Bucovina Monasteries from Neamt and Suceava counties, wooden churches - Maramures, Danube Delta, Bran (Dracula Castle), medieval cities (Brasov, Sighisoara, Sibiu, Medias, Deva, Cluj, Alba-Iulia), watering resorts (Baile Felix, Baile Herculane, Baile Tusnad, Calimanesti-Caciulata, Olanesti, Sovata, Vatra-Dornei, Eforie Nord etc.), a lot of caves.

The main destinations for the foreign tourists are the Black Sea Coast, the Carpathian Mountains, the wellness resorts and the destinations for business tourism.

4. SWOT ANALYSIS ON ROMANIAN TOURISM

To be able to use tourism activities at the development of Romania it is necessary to make a serious analyze regarding strong and weak points of the actual level of Romanian tourism. This study is presented below:

STRONG POINTS

Generals:

- the Romanian image has been improved in time; some efforts should be made in order to sustain this image.

- the number of foreign tourists follows a positive trend

The natural potential:

- Unspoiled nature – proper for the development of ecological tourism and natural tourism

- great, dreamful nature

- strong cultural potential

Accommodation:

- acceptable accommodation services

- nice and friendly service, very hospitable people

Beach, Bathing, Swimming:

- Black Sea beach is good

- good tourism (3 points on a scale from 1 to 5)

Cultural tourism:

- very large tourism offer

- culture also has a great touristic potential, but should be known better

- absolutely great in Bucovina and and Transilvania

- very diverse offer, but for individual holiday makers not always easy to reach

Tourism personnel:

- most of the time they are very friendly and polite

Gastronomy:

- very good, mostly far better than expected

- good taste and typical for the country

- good original cuisine

- regarded as opulent and good - meals in restaurants are far better than in hotels

Tours operators activity:

- have been appreciated as good and very good

- tour operators are actively involved in connection with external partners

- clients are mostly satisfied with organization

- their activity gets better and better

Public Service, Customs:

- considered to be good

- fast, quick procedure at the border

- much better than before, no comparison with the Nineties (in a positive way)

Low Cost Airlines:

- 2 new companies have been founded: Blue Air and Blue Line

WEAK POINTS

Generals:

- infrastructure

- the season is to short

- the foreign tourists consider that some components of the tourism offer may not always be fulfilled

- price-quality-ratio not always in balance

The natural potential:

- should be improved as far as the environment is concerned – littering problem

- some areas are not very clean

- the pollution of the water in some tourism areas should be controlled

Accommodation:

- accommodation not always tidy, bad service, breakfast not always good

- rather simple standard, often with "Eastern-charm"

- partly without proper care, although simple standard is not a problem

- partly rather expensive, sometimes bad service, everything takes a very long time, music too loud, food too cold

- staff not always friendly, helpful

- variable hotel standard during round trips

- not sufficient Three Star hotels

Beach, Bathing, Swimming:

- Black Sea beach good, but dirty, not cleaned, too expensive

- the water is not so clean

- seaside is loud, noisy and bad service

- lack of swimming pools in the country

Cultural tourism:

- better protection of historical monuments (fortified churches and deserted villages)

- the cultural monuments sometimes are not properly indicated or illuminated

- better promotion of the monuments

Tourism personnel:

- the quality of the services is not always at high standards

- the personnel is not well qualified

- the Four Star Hotels do not always have the best qualified personnel

- the quality of the environment where the services are offered is not so good

Gastronomy:

- rather too much meat and lack of fresh products

- beware of fast food, convenience food, international food

- more local products like juice, beer, wine instead of Fanta, Cola, etc

- not enough choice of typical Romanian dishes

- varying food standard during round trips

- partly rather expensive, sometimes bad service, everything takes a very long time, music too loud, food too cold

- food in hotels could be better

- service is not yet used with handling groups: problems when taking the orders and non-transparent accounting

Tours operators activity:

- working methods are not very dynamic and creative

- communication could be improved

Public Service, Customs:

- very slow and bureaucratic

Should be more easy going, not so bureaucratic

- problems when crossing with the identity card only

- sometimes rather "harassing"

- rather bad, except for local service partners

- bike transport should be improved considerably

sometimes not transparent situations in the activity of the customs officials

Low Cost Airlines:

- compared with the international level, airline prices to Romania are by far too high, low cost carriers are important

- very important because air fares of the scheduled airlines are very expensive

- unfortunately there is no real alternative on the market compared with other destinations of utmost importance, because the long and expensive journey to get there is one of the greatest obstacles

OPORTUNITIES

- Romania is considered to be a safe destination

- there is a minimal legislation

- there are specific organizations and funds for protected areas, biodiversity

- the govern begun to pay attention to the protected areas

- tour operators plan some new theme for Romania: cultural programs, trips, active tourism, mountain biking

- most of the tour-operators are interested in info-tours especially in Bucovina, Maramures, Portile de Fier and Banat, Delta Dunarii, cultural tourism and active tourism

- the tourists' opinion about Romania is much better than the image that Romanians have created in time. The most appreciated things are: hospitality, nature, landscape, mountain routes

- credible tourism stakeholders

- the development of a network with funds for biking tourism

- better promotion of Romania outside the borders

- better information activities

THREATS

- threats from other touristic destination which offer similar products (Bulgaria)

- an intensive and extensive development of the tourism in the Danube Delta – that may be destructive for the beauty of the area

- the Romanian people should not necessarily copy the western standards, but should preserve the authenticity and the specific of the area

- tourists skepticism about Romania

From this SWOT analysis of Romanian tourism it is obvious that being tourist in this country is a pleasure, but also a real challenge.

5. CONCLUSIONS

An effective tourism strategy would recognise that Romania has no hope of attracting foreign visitors in significant numbers if tourist facilities continue to charge at least Western European prices for services which in many cases have barely improved since communism. At present, the resorts seem to survive on Romanian tourists who prefer to stay in their own country or have become used to doing so. But this market too is diminishing as more and more Romanians are refusing to put up with such poor quality in relation to price and are heading for Greece, Turkey and other countries. The easing of departure restrictions for Romanian citizens leaving the country to visit the Schengen area has given a further incentive to holiday abroad. With EU accession, the bureaucratic impediments to foreign travel for Romanians will further diminish.

As in many areas of the Romanian economy, foreign investment is critical if a revival of the country's tourism is to take place. This should lead to a radical improvement in quality, as infrastructure is upgraded to Western standards, staff are trained in basic service skills and prices are set to match comparable facilities in other countries. Experienced investors will also realise that a significant increase in the number of visitors will not happen overnight and that it will take some years before Romania's poor reputation as a tourist destination begins to change. Yet so far, many potential developers have been driven away by the standard problems which have affected investors in all sectors, such as lack of clarity or stability of legislation and a tax system which remains Byzantine in spite of the introduction of the flat tax in 2005. Corruption inevitably leads many to abandon plans for investment in Romania, because those without the right connections are so frequently at a disadvantage. The poor quality of the infrastructure is a severe impediment to investors, such as the continued lack of a proper motorway network, while lack of sustainable planning on a local level has made Romania's tourist facilities unattractive to many, as the state authorities fail to provide effective services. One tour operator which considered offering holidays on the Romanian Black Sea coast in the last couple of years is rumoured to have been deterred by the presence of wild dogs on the country's beaches.

The years after 1989 ought to have seen a substantial influx of tourists keen to enjoy the country's numerous attractions. Instead, the sector fell into decline. Areas which should have seen economic regeneration have fallen victim to rising unemployment. A responsible government strategy ought to concentrate on attracting the necessary expertise to develop the tourist industry, offering investors a low tax economy with a minimum of red tape, as well as providing the infrastructure which developers would like to see.

The Romanian tourism potential could compete with the touristic supply of any other country in the world thus significantly contributing to the income growth.

As far as the internal market is concerned we can notice a migration tendency of the touristic demand towards the touristic products import which reflects the spectacular growth of the number of voyages made by the Romanian tourists abroad.

Some of the possible ways of tourism relaunching constitutes the elaboration of some efficient marketing strategies and politics starting from a marketing environment analysis. In order to conceive and promote a competitive Romanian touristic product the adoption of a quality rise strategy is essential.

It is certain that for Romania tourism represents a great opportunity which must be exploited at the beginning of the third millenium.

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