

An Investigative Study on the Use of Online Marketing Methods in Hungary

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Abstract : With the development of the information technology, IT, sector, all industry of the world has a new path, dealing with digitalisation. Tourism is the most rapidly increasing industry in the world. Without digitalisation, tourism operators would not be competitive enough with foreign destinations or other experience-based service providers. Digitalisation is also necessary to enable organizations, which are interested in tourism to meet the growing expectations of consumers. With the help of digitalisation, tourism providers can also obtain information about tourists, changes in consumer behaviour, and the use of online services. The degree of digitalisation in tourism is different for different services. The research is based on a questionnaire survey conducted in 2018 in Hungary. The sample with more than 500 respondents was processed by the SPSS program, using a variety of analysis methods. The following two variables were observed from more aspects: frequency of travel and the importance of services related to online travel. With the help of these variables, a cluster analysis was performed among the participants. The sample can be divided into two groups using K-mean cluster analysis. Cluster '1' is a positive group; they can be called the "most digital tourists." They agree in most things, with low standard deviation, and for them, digitalisation is a starting point. To the members of Cluster '2', digitalisation is important, too. The results show what is important (accommodation, information gathering) to them, but also what they are not interested in at all within the digital world (e.g., car rental or online sharing). Interestingly, there is no third negative cluster. This result (that there is no result) proves that tourism uses digitalisation, and the question is only the extent of the use of online tools and methods. With the help of the designed consumer groups, the characteristics of digital tourism segments can be identified. The help of different variables characterised these groups. One of them is the frequency of travel, where there is a significant correlation between travel frequency and cluster membership. The shift is clear towards Cluster '1', which means, those who find services related to online travel more important, are more likely to travel as well. By learning more about digital tourists' consumer behaviour, the results of this research can help the providers in what kind of marketing tools could be used to influence the consumer choices of the different consumer groups created using digital devices, furthermore how to conduct more detailed and effective marketing activities. The main finding of the research was that most of the people have digital tools which are important to be able to participate in e-tourism. Of these, mobile devices are increasingly preferred. That means the challenge for service providers is no longer the digital presence but having optimised application for different devices.

Keywords : cluster analysis, digital tourism, marketing tool, tourist behaviour

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