

The Effects of Distribution Channels on the Selling Prices of Hotels in Time of Crisis

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Abstract : Distribution channels play significant role for hotels. Direct and indirect selling options of hotel rooms have been increased especially with the help of new technologies, i.e. hotel's own web sites and online booking sites. Although these options emerged as tools for diversifying the distribution channels, vast number of hotels -mostly resort hotels- is still heavily dependent upon international tour operators when selling their products. On the other hand, hotel sector is so vulnerable against crises. Economic, political or any other crisis can affect hotels very badly and so it is critical to have the right balance of distribution channel to avoid the adverse impacts of a crisis. In this study, it is aimed to search the impacts of a general crisis on the selling prices of hotels which have different weights of distribution channels. The study was done in Turkey where various crises occurred in 2015 and 2016 which had great negative impacts on Turkish tourism and led enormous occupancy rate and selling price reductions. 112 upscale resort hotel in Antalya, which is the most popular tourism destination of Turkey, joined to the research. According to the results, hotels with high dependency to international tour operators are more forced to reduce their room prices in crisis time compared to the ones which use their own web sites more. It was also found that the decline in room prices is limited for hotels which are working with national tour operators and travel agencies in crisis time.

Keywords : marketing channels, crisis, hotel, international tour operators, online travel agencies

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