# WEB COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT IN HOTEL MARKETING

# UPRAVLJANJE WEB KOMUNIKACIJOM U HOTELSKOM MARKETINGU

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*Abstract*

All businesses have recognized the importance and significance of creating, maintaining and using databases of their guests, clients, customers and other consumers of their products or services. The methodology used in collecting data has changed and developed parallel with the development and application of information and communication technologies. The transformation of data collection from the manual method to the use of technology and the Web has helped to facilitate the collection of large quantities of personal data concerning the consumers of products or services. As a result, hoteliers and other actors on the supply side are faced with an enormous quantity of unstructured, mostly transactional, data collected via the Web. A methodology known as data mining has emerged in response to this problem. Data mining refers to a process of searching for and using valuable data which hoteliers can take advantage of in their one-to-one marketing strategy. Recent studies show that future service consumers rely more on the personal experiences of current consumers than on conventional advertising methods. The reason for this lies in the emotional experiences of individuals in a hospitality facility or tourist destination. While, on the one hand, the daily comments of past service consumers posted on social networks may provide hoteliers with a promotional opportunity to attract future service consumers, on the other hand, they can represent a real threat by dissuading future service consumers. Today's blogs represent an enormous source of highly valued data with a relatively high dose of credibility. When writing blogs, people reveal themselves and their experiences which are in most cases imbued with personal feelings, giving them a higher level of persuasiveness. Based on the

*Sažetak*

Važnost i značaj kreiranja, održavanja i korištenja baza podataka o svojim gostima, klijentima, kupcima i svim ostalim potrošačima proizvoda ili usluga, prepoznale su sve gospodarske djelatnosti. Metodologija prikupljanja tih podataka, mijenjala se i razvijala usporedno sa razvojem i primjenom informacijsko-komunikacijskih tehnologija. Transformacija prikupljanja podataka od manualnog načina do korištenja tehnologije i web-a, doprinijela je povećanju mogućnosti za prikupljanje velikog broja osobnih podataka o korisnicima proizvoda ili usluga. Istovremeno, te mogućnosti dovele su do pojave da se hotelijeri i ostali subjekti na strani ponude susreću sa velikom količinom nestrukturiranih i većinom transakcijskih podataka prikupljenih putem web-a. Kao odgovor na takve probleme, pojavila se metodologija pod nazivom rudarenje podataka. Ona upućuje na proces traženja i korištenja visokovrijednih podataka, koje hotelijeri mogu iskoristiti u svojoj strategiji marketinga „jedan prema jednome". Recentna istraživanja pokazuju da budući korisnici usluga imaju više povjerenja u osobna iskustva dosadašnjih korisnika usluga nego u tradicionalne metode oglašavanja i reklamiranja. Razlog tome leži u doživljajnim emocijama pojedinaca u nekom ugostiteljskom objektu ili turističkoj destinaciji. Dok svakodnevni komentari prijašnjih korisnika usluga na društvenim mrežama, s jedne strane hotelijerima omogućuju promotivnu šansu za buduće korisnike usluga, dotle s druge strane, to može predstavljati realnu opasnost za odbijanje budućih korisnika usluga. Današnji blogovi predstavljaju ogroman izvor visoko vrijednih podataka, sa relativnom visokom dozom vjerodostojnosti. Ljudi u takvim tekstovima otkrivaju sebe, svoje doživljaje koja su u većini slučajeva prožeta osobnim iskustvima, što

research problem, the basic hypothesis of this paper can be formulated, which reads: Web data mining provides a better approach to using guest databases and enables more-effective personalization in identifying the needs, wants and habits of guests as future service consumers.

## INTRODUCTION

The practice of gathering the comments and complaints of guests based on a reactive approach has been shown to be slow and inadequate in ensuring timely reactions to change on the market. Typically, the sources of such data (received through complaints, suggestions, etc.) are guests who are either exceptionally satisfied or exceptionally dissatisfied and who are a minority relative to those guests who choose to remain silent. By focusing only on the opinions of the former, while neglecting the opinions of the silent majority, hotels can come to have a misguided understanding of what value means to guests.

The question that faces marketing managers today is: *How can guests be encouraged to express their opinions and to share these opinions with others?* The hotel industry is gradually moving towards a holistic understanding about the provision of services and guest feedback that is facilitated by the use of the mobile Internet and social networks. Today's Internet market is characterised by transparency and globalisation. Before deciding upon a hotel, guests can compare brands and prices at the click of a mouse. Guests can no longer be expected to repeat their stay in a hotel or hotel group just because they were satisfied with the service experienced, because they are affected by numerous other aspects during and after the service rendered. These aspects can be seen in trends, in how guests perceive the value of services experienced, in the extent to which services experienced match expectations, in the influence of competition, etc. With the development of the Internet, supply (hotels) and demand (guests)have become equally knowledgeable of current trends. However, if a hotel is to be successful in managing guest satisfaction, it must always be one step ahead of its guests. It can achieve this by applying marketing as a philosophy that is continuously put into action through a proactive approach, with special emphasis on anticipating guest behaviour. Anticipating guest behaviour is closely linked to past experience, C2C (Customer

za posljedicu ima i veći stupanj uvjerljivosti. Na temelju ovako determiniranog problema istraživanja, moguće je postaviti temeljnu hipotezu u ovom radu, koja glasi: rudarenje web podacima omogućuje kvalitetniji pristup korištenja baze podataka o gostima i efikasniju individualizaciju u prepoznavanju njihovih potreba, želja i navika kao budućih korisnika usluga.

to Customer) communication, and guest preferences and needs that are stored in databases that are capable of generating knowledge of guests by providing end users with consistent and updated information.

## 1. MODERN MARKETING TRENDS IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY

Although marketers are called upon to resolve numerous issues, the primary issue they are asked to address is: *Can the mind-sets and decision-making methods created within the context of products be applied to services, and are these services good enough to meet the needs of today's guests?*

A hotel's marketing mix is a comprehensive system of interconnected variables that it uses to achieve an expected volume of sales. Known as the 4Ps, a marketing mix consists of the following variables: (1)*product*, (2) *price*, (3) *place* and (4) *promotion*. Because of the networks of relations that hotels have, hoteliers often extend this conventional division to include (5) people (the 5Ps) and even (6) performance (the 6Ps). /**1**/ For example, the Walt Disney Company calls it workers *cast members*, because it teaches them about perfect performance. Workers are actors who perform when a guest "comes on stage". This way of looking at service provision can lead to a change in the way workers think; workers are extolled because it is their behaviour that determines how well a service, which must be perfect, will be performed. At the same time, the importance of guests grows, because guests are the ones who will judge the performance. The interlacing of different communication instruments is a prevailing trend in the modern world of business. For example, the differences between conventional marketing and public relations are becoming increasingly blurred; their common interest – influencing the public – is becoming the basis of their interconnectedness. With the development of technology and the Internet, in particular, guests have become quite sophisticated when it comes to being well-informed about an offering. Influencing the mind-set of guests is becoming increas-

ingly harder. With the globalisation of Internet users, it is no longer possible to impact on the manner of thinking of guests using the conventional components of promotion, as it was several years ago. Experts have coined expressions referring to the failures of conventional marketing, the best known being *market immunity*. /**2**/ This term refers to the disregard of guest relations, because in most cases guests are seen as mere consumers of the products and services that hotels provide on the market. The poor performance of marketing efforts is a consequence of market immunity. In their businesses, successful hoteliers use and combine different forms of marketing. Some types of marketing reflect world trends. For example, the importance of *mobile marketing* is growing parallel with the development of smartphones. Studies have shown that even when they are close to their personal computers one third of users prefer smartphones for searching the WWW or sending e-mail. /**3**/ The use of mobile phones for e-mailing has also grown from 37.4 per cent to 41.6 per cent with the increased use of smartphones. /**4**/ Leading hotel groups boast of excellent results obtained through the introduction of modern technologies. For example, the IHG (InterContinental Hotels Group) has trained a team of 20 people in charge of developing mobile applications for all the group's activities. At Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide they also believe in developing the mobile Internet and mobile phone-based booking. Although mobile phone-based booking accounts for only a small percentage of overall bookings, it has a significant annual growth rate of 400 per cent (while turnover has grown by 300 per cent). /**5**/

Within mobile marketing, there is a variety of forms of marketing, the importance of which varies depending upon the development of mobile technologies, the price of Internet services, messages, invitation, etc. For example, Text Message marketing and Bluetooth marketing are rapidly surrendering their development to mobile portals, mobile advertising, mobile applications, etc. Mobile portals are Internet pages adapted to portable devices, such as mobile phones, on which businesses can post informative contents.

*Bluetooth marketing* is based on providing location-based services, that is, services that are built on recognising the location of a mobile phone user. For example, when users come within the Bluetooth range of a business, they can receive specific information concerning the products or services provided by

that business. Smartphones have continued to development Bluetooth marketing, but in a much broader context, by providing numerous services through applications. Location-based services via mobile applications are very popular among the many smartphone users, because they provide users with instantaneous information concerning businesses, interesting facts, events in a destination, etc. Where mobile applications in the hotel industry are concerned, large hotel groups typically lead the way, because they see mobile applications as an opportunity to improve upon the prior methods of attracting the interest of guests and, in turn, to generate additional revenue. An example is the mobile application of the hotel group Caesars Palace Las Vegas that combines GPS to allow users to receive marketing messages throughout their travels. If users select the *Entertainment* option on their screens, they can see all the events in the group's hotels within the time period selected by users. /**6**/

The importance of *social network marketing* has grown parallel with the growing number of social network users. Social network marketing consists of three crucial steps in user management: creating users, managing users and tracking users. /**7**/ Monitoring is the most demanding, as well as the most important, step in exporting knowledge. Once a page has been designed and a platform for monitoring guests put in place, it is necessary to continuously increase the Fan base and to ensure systematic monitoring. There is a variety of Web software available for Internet monitoring, such as Google Analytics (which makes it possible to trackthe activity of guestsby using codes integrated into blog pages, Facebook pages, etc.). By using an integrated interface, the system makes it possible to track activity and give speedy responses, as well as to make comparisons with other hotels in the hotel group. Large hotel groups have increased the number of jobs engaged in PR management. For example, within PR management, jobs have been created that deal only in managing relations with social networks. Professionals in these jobs devise new ways on how to win the public and increase the Fan-base, encourage fans to post comments, make the hotel top-of-mind in customers, and keep customers tied to the hotel. The Preferred Hotel Group of Chicago has developed a corporate page on Facebook and, since the beginning of the year when the group introduced its *Win a Two-night Stay* competition, the number of users has doubled to 7600. Unlike conventional means of advertis-

ing, guest comments are made by guests for guests, so credibility is always greater from their perspective. One thing that can be said in favour of social networks is that they yield multiple benefits, which top any other Web page. Social networks are also one of the most active ways of advertising on-line and, as a result, have a direct impact on how travels are researched, planned, purchased and assessed. Most analysts agree that social networks are not only an additional set of distribution channels but also represent a kind of leap in thinking of the way that marketing and communication affect guests. /8/ However, simply being present on a social network, without a clear objective and performance measurement, is not enough. The previous practise of advertising through so-called monologues needs to be replaced with the dialogue model, which ensures that hotels know what their guests are saying about them.

*Viral marketing* and neuromarketing are among the less known forms of marketing. Viral marketing uses specific techniques for spreading a virus through e-mail in a legitimate way, because it spreads based on the user's consent, or to put it simply, by the user's carelessness, for example, by a user installing various programmes that require additional information and confirmation from the person installing the programme. Once the installation process has been confirmed, another programme is downloaded which is in charge of sending e-mails and short messages through an instant messenger programme. The recipient of the message is "infected" with entertaining and interesting contents from the Internet, and then becomes a message sender "infecting" contacts from the mail or friends list. /9/ In addition to spreading by e-mail, viral marketing can also spread through social networks, by a simple click on *like*, for example.

*Neuromarketing* is known but rarely used technique that provides images of brain activity in the key moments of purchasing a product. This technique involves the use of magnetic resonance imaging which makes it possible to identify the parts of the brain connected with movement or emotions. Studies for the purpose of marketing focus primarily on measuring emotional stimulus and seek answers to the question: What can stimulate a certain part of the brain to make a person buy something? Considering the personnel and equipment required, the difficulties in selecting a sample and the disapproval of a large part of the public, such studies are usually an expensive and time-consuming technique. All this brings the feasibility of neuromarketing into question.

The foundation of modern marketing is made up of the people needs, with a person seen as individual demand. Successful hoteliers have recognized these individual demands and have focused their plans on meeting this demand rather than on designing hotel products that they plan to sell.

This has led to the development of *personalized marketing* or *one-to-one marketing*, in which marketers seek to differentiate a product or service as much as possible relative to rival products or services by directly targeting individual customers and by personalizing marketing messages. One-to-one marketers seek to make a unique offering to each potential guest, and the wording of their messages is such that the recipient gains the impression that the hotel is addressing only him and is expecting feedback information from him. Each of the above types of marketing is the result of long − term study of guest behaviour, trends and practices. It is impossible to design a formula for an ideal marketing combination. Every marketing tactic and every message targeting a guest must have an objective, the accomplishment of which must be measurable. Clearly, the number of employees carrying out this complex business function in hotels can be expected to grow with the further development of technology and the Internet. New forms of marketing will also emerge that will be modified, updated and developed and may eventually disappear, but at their core they will all have the same fundamental reasoning: *customising services to meet guest needs for the purpose of enhancing competitive ability, sales and profits*.

## 2. WEB DATA

Although the features of the marketplace change from day to day, data transparency can be said to be one of the primary attributes of today's markets. Web 2.0 has helped to increase efficiency in businesses. A study carried out by a team of experts at McKinsey Global Institute (2010) has concluded that by using Web 2.0:

- 63% of companies have increased the effectiveness of their marketing efforts
- 45% of companies claim to have lower marketing costs
- 77% of companies have recorded greater speed in acquiring knowledge within the organization
- 57% of companies have recorded greater speed in acquiring knowledge outside the organization.

Today, information travels at the speed of thought. Information technology is becoming a company's

digital nervous system because it instantaneously transfers information and "business stimulations", thereby initiating rapid action. By understanding the speed at which information travels, one can understand the speed at which data is created. The introduction of barcodes in retail businesses made it possible to collect from 100 to 1000 times more information than using conventional methods. The importance of barcodes in retail can be compared to the importance of the Internet in the hotel industry today that provides access to valuable, updated and highly confidential information that enables saving time and money. The importance of the telephone as a primary communication medium began to decline with the advent of the Internet and other new forms of communication with guests. The telephone is being supplanted by Internet services, such as electronic mail, interactive information exchange, text and speech chat, mobile Internet, etc. **/10/** With the development of the Internet, the costs of communication channels have dropped. In an Internet environment, users have become accustomed to fast and cheap access to information, friends, etc. Through e-business, the marketplace on the Internet is becoming the most important channel for providing services. Easy access, no red-tape, minimal costs and speed have inevitably led to an expansion of users but also to a dependency upon this method of communication. The factors that will make a difference among numerous businesses accessible on the Internet are: **/11/**

- *Speed* – Every aspect of a business's operations and organization function and change in real time.
- *Connectedness* –Everything is connected electronically (products, people, companies, countries, etc.)
- *Value added* – The importance of so-called intangible value added (image, emotions, information, and security) in every product and service is growing.

Because these three factors are interrelated and interdependent, they must be brought together to form a whole. Hoteliers have to be aware that reasons of small relevance are increasingly becoming crucial in a guest's decision – that could be only a click-on-a-mouse away – to turn to the competition. For instance, waiting on the "promised" value added, or the inability to access other hotels in a hotel group (using the hotel-group loyalty card), could be only some of the reasons for customer defection. Hoteliers often fall into the added-value trap, because they fail

to deliver added value in the quality expected of them. For example, instead of being an additional service, the possibility of sending e-mail directly from a Web page could become a "disservice". According to a survey by Jupiter Research **/12/** only a third of the companies surveyed promptly confirmed to clients the receipt of their e-mails. While most companies do answer the e-mails received, only 52% reply within 24 hours and 32%, within three days. The near future is expected to see a continuation of the trend for greater Internet control for marketing purposes in real time. All actors on the supply side, hoteliers included, are chiefly interested in access to information that has the highest rating as far as guest credibility is concerned. Such information is typically derived from guests talking to each other. This is so-called customer-to-customer (C2C) communication. C2C communication or word-of-mouth (mouth-to-ear) is considered to be the most trustworthy and most effective method of convincing potential guests about the quality of a service or product. The importance of this type of communication has grown parallel with the expansion of social networks, forums, etc. C2C communication is also a model that allows guests to communicate, while ensuring the transparency of all participants on the Web. The model's significance is seen in the fact that guests can make both positive and negative comments, which are then disseminated at immense speed. What hoteliers need to do, is to be there in that crucial moment. What mattered up till now does not necessarily have to matter tomorrow. Unlike several years earlier, guests now feel they have the upper hand over hotels, and their decisions are influenced by a considerably larger web of circumstances. Guests are capable of recognizing marketing tricks; they know how to get the information they want, and they know where to go to get recommendations. Hoteliers are conducting talks in the way that guests prefer and through the channel of communication that guests want. The solution that marketers are looking for can be found in Customer Relationship Management (CRM), with new processes and new technologies. Given the plethora of promises they are swamped with, guests have become especially sceptical towards the interests of a hotel to meet their needs. Increasingly, guests are looking for guarantees that will ensure that businesses are held responsible for any mistakes or possible problems**. /13/**

## 3.  DATA MINING

The routine of business relations has compelled almost every business entity to assemble its data in forms that will easily and quickly provide it with the information required, information that is consistent, systemised, updated and transparent. Evolving from data files, the database concept is a concept for assembling data that emerged from the efforts of finding a solution to the problem of the non-unification of different data. In gathering data, the most widespread practice among hoteliers is the use of the so-called *guest and booking history card*. Hotel reservation officers used history cards to recognize steady guests when they called again and to meet their typical requests. **/14/** Based on these structured history cards, hoteliers would derive daily statistical indicators that were then applied in decision making. In 1977, CODASYL (Conference on DAtaSYstems Languages), the world's largest association of producers and users, developed the model of a system for working with databases, the Database Management System (DBMS). /**15**/

The structure of this model involves four levels: /**16**/

- the user level,
- the linguistic level for working with databases,
- the database management system level,
- the level of technical infrastructure.

The *user level* consists of two types of users: end users, on the one hand, and information professionals, on the other. The *linguistic level for working with databases* plays an intermediary role between the user level and the *database management system level*, which is the central and most important level. Namely, to obtain answers, end users apply specific languages (mostly query languages) so as to meet their job needs. On the other hand, the system concurrently enables talking to programmers (programming languages or so-called data manipulation languages)

who are in charge of developing applications for end users. Wanting to find specific information needed in the work process, users send a command to the DBMS using a programming language. The system then receives a command to retrieve a specific content from the database. This means the DBMS also operates as an intermediary in both directions, between the database contents and the end users or programmers. *Technical infrastructure*, the fourth level, comprises a computer with central units and external memories in which databases are stored. With the development of technology, databases have become much more complex (all business systems are integrated into a whole) on the one hand, while on the other, using databases has never been easier (easy access through an integrated interface). Information systems are designed to facilitate the organization of work. This is clearly evident in front desk operations, as these systems provide the staff with information on room reservations, charts showing capacities according to room type and availability, guest history cards, guest check-ins and check-outs, and all details relating to the cash desk. Problems, however, emerged that were similar in many hotels. Namely, while information systems enabled financial and statistical analyses, what was missing, was an information base that integrated all market flows in real time. This type of contemporary management reporting was made possible by integrated Web data warehouses. From its very beginning, data warehousing was a vital concept for an effective Decision Support System. It carried the idea of actively searching for and providing the information needed by managers in the decision process. /**17**/ The procedures it uses include analytical processing, data digging and discovering knowledge from data. The warehousing concept employs the logical sequence of data transformation (Figure1).

**Figure 1** *Logical sequence in deriving knowledge , Source:By the author*
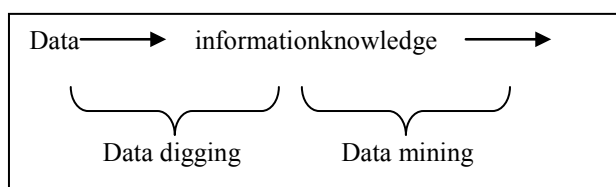


*Data digging* and *data mining* are operations that can be carried out in data warehouses. Data digging, the simpler operation, focuses on searching for data that will meet a specific information-related need, such as finding data on a guest who has left

without paying. This data then becomes information, because in the given moment it becomes a piece of previously unknown news. Data mining goes beyond data digging. It is an operation by which an in-depth search of a data warehouse is carried out to find new

knowledge which can be used in psychographic market segmentation, for example, or in planning new marketing strategies based on guest information, etc.

## 4. WEB MINING AND GUEST SATISFACTION MANAGEMENT

Since the very beginning of e-business, what matters the most to hotel managers is the *knowledge* derived from Web page analysis, such as:

- knowing the effect of Web-based marketing and promotion
- quantifying visitor numbers, the length of stays, the value of transactions carried out, the number of likes, etc.

*Web mining* was created for this purpose. Web mining comprises a set of methods used in analysing huge amounts of data from Web sites to discover the behavioural patterns of Web site visitors./18/As a forerunner, data mining basically consists of the same operations as Web mining:

1. searching for data
2. processing data
3. analysing data
4. distributing knowledge.

The difference between the two processes, however, can be seen in the *activities, place and speed* of gathering data. By using specialized software to monitor all the Web sites on which a hotel appears, Web mining is incomparably faster in gathering and analysing data and in getting information.

Examples of the use of Web mining include:

- *Discovering guest behavioural patterns on a hotel's Web pages*–Which Web pages do users hop to and from? On which Web pages do they give up searching? Once a behavioural pattern has been discovered, the *reasons* for such behaviour are identified (did a user leave the Web page after finding the price list or because of having to wait too long, etc.) and possible changes are considered (redesigning the Web pages).

- *Identifying Web site visitors and gathering information about them.* Who are these visitors? Are they regular guests or guests who have never stayed at the hotel? How do they access the Web (using their mobile phones or computers)?

- *Identifying a Web site's peak load time.* It is necessary to ensure that guests will be able to search the Web site quickly and easily even during peak load times, because otherwise the guest is likely to stop searching.

*Service personalization* is the primary aim of Web mining. Today's guests want to feel welcome and safe. They are not looking only for information but for solutions as well, and these solutions must be the best, the fastest, the largest and the cheapest, because otherwise they will go elsewhere.

Other objectives of Web mining include:

- building up-dated Web databases
- focusing marketing campaigns on a narrow segment, thus cutting back costs and enhancing guest loyalty
- making comparisons with rivals
- managing customer relations
- anticipating the future behaviour of guests.

The advantage of today's Web mining can be condensed into one word, *integration*. All the opinions and wishes of guests on the Internet can be collected using unique software that works on the principles of keyword recognition. An example is eBuzz Connect, specialized software for the hotel industry. Its task is to continuously monitor on-line comments on all Web pages (OTA, Expedia, TripAdvisor, etc.) in which a hotel appears, and then to systematically derive knowledge (charts, tables) from the data collected.

Table 1 shows an example of knowledge obtained in this way (a comparison of rivals based on the ranking of hotel chains on social networks)

Table 1 Ranking of hotel chains on social networks (2010)

| Rank | Brand | Presence | Visibility | Activity | Brand association |
|------|-------|----------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| 1. | Best Western | 1 | 5 | 2 | 4 |
| 2. | Hilton | 1 | 2 | 7 | 2 |
| 3. | Marriott Hotels & Resorts | 1 | 1 | 4 | 7 |
| 4. | Holiday Inn | 1 | 10 | 11 | 1 |
| 5. | Hyatt Regency | 11 | 26 | 1 | 9 |

| 6. | InterContinental Hotels | 25 | 13 | 10 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7. | Renaissance Hotel | 25 | 9 | 16 | 5 |
| 8. | Riu Hotels & Resorts | 34 | 6 | 6 | 13 |
| 9. | Travelodge | 34 | 24 | 3 | 11 |
| 10. | Westin | 11 | 7 | 12 | 17 |
| 11. | Embassy Suites Hotels | 25 | 4 | 20 | 8 |
| 12. | Holiday Inn Express | 1 | 22 | 15 | 14 |
| 13. | Bracelo | 44 | 17 | 19 | 3 |
| 14. | Country Inns & Suites Hotels | 34 | 28 | 13 | 10 |
| 15. | Le Méridien | 44 | 8 | 17 | 12 |

*Source: Soft solutions LTD; EssecBusiness School (15/49)*

Based on an analysis of social networks, Table 1 ranks the first 15 world hotel brands by guest presence, positioning, guest activities and the time guests stay on a hotel's Web pages. Best Western is ranked first, followed by Hilton, Marriott Hotels & Resorts, Holiday Inn and others. Today, guests, who want to learn about a destination prior to their arrival, have broad access to information available in a variety of forms (electronic form, brochures, etc.). As the amount of data on the Internet continues to grow, it is no longer a matter of how to get information but rather how credible is the information found. Guests are becoming increasing better informed and more sensitive to any attempt of deception. As part of counter-marketing advertisements targeting the mass public, many Web pages have been developed that seek to be as credible as possible in managing guest relations. When it comes to data credibility, the leading Internet pages are those on which guests can directly post their experiences of a hotel or destination. Today, more than 68 million Internet users post comments and recommendations about products and services. /**19**/ The Internet has made it possible to erase the border between organizations and the world, enabling non-employees to share their expert advice in a new way, thus becoming external collaborators. By Web mining, a hotel can use its "external collaborators" to locate where information is coming from, thus creating links around the world. In this way, a hotel gets to know its guests and empathize with them. It lets them know how important their opinions are, and in exchange it sees the number of its satisfied and loyal guests grow. Web mining enables hotels to identify potential guests, satisfied and dissatisfied guests, and guests who have proved to be loyal. At the core of managing guest relations is the need to underline the importance of all aspects of cooperation that a hotel offer. In this way, a hotel can draw attention to the importance of the additional services it offers, while downplaying the importance of prices. CRM is a strategy for differentiating the market from the perspective of all guests. Through the use of modern information technology hotels seek to focus on the smallest possible target groups (preferably a one-to-one relationship), while continuing to have a profitable business relation with the guest**. /20/**

**CONCLUSION**

The expansion of Internet users, in general, has led to the fact that providing digital contents to a broad range of people without prior segmentation does no longer meet the criteria of end users. Experiences that match individual needs should be provided instead. Today's mass advertising model is being replaced by a new model that encourages emotional and experiential contents based on C2C communication. The objective of dialogue marketing is to have an *intuitive approach* to guests. Data gathered in a technological environment, without causing undue disturbance to guests, will help to generate ideas about what guests might want or wish.

Success is achieved through the quality of data; in other words, through systematic monitoring via the Internet that is organized by hotel management with the help of integrated information technology. In this way, a hotel can reach out to more markets and get closer to guests. The challenge hoteliers need to address is how to engage guests to lead a hotel to success by sharing their experiences about the hotel on virtual networks. Such Web pages can provide new ideas to new problems that hoteliers are perhaps not even aware of.

*Notes*

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