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CULTURAL TOURISTS AND THE SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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Abstract

The development of new technologies has rapidly changed the way of communicating, especially in this century. The virtual world brings a lot of advantages to all stakeholders in tourism. The purpose of the study was to identify the main sources of information for cultural tourists visiting Dubrovnik in the postseason, “before” visiting and once when they were at the destination. The empirical research was carried out in September and October 2015 in Dubrovnik. Survey data was collected from 211 visitors. The results show Internet as a dominant source of information. Contribution of this paper can be found in the ‘niche approach’ to the research reflected in connecting the target group (cultural tourists) with the sources of information. The results can be used in the destination marketing. The virtual environment offers huge opportunities to the marketers, especially in the process of communication when they can have feedback from the customers very quickly. It is crucial because two main factors of the quality of the modern destination product are quality of all its segments (items and people), and quality of the communication.

Keywords: the sources of information, Internet, cultural/heritage tourists, target market, Dubrovnik

1. INTRODUCTION

The increase in Internet users and the concept of Web 2.0 was quite a revolutionary innovation of Information and Communication Technology, and of the way of using the Internet, implying professional and social online communities. The Internet also increasingly mediates tourism experiences as tourists use social media sites to portray, reconstruct and relive their trips (Pudliner, 2007). This has led to consumer-generated media being perceived as

more trustworthy when compared to content from official destination websites, travel agents, and mass media (Fotis et al., 2012).

Nowadays the most important issue which raises the value of the destination product is the quantity and quality of communication, which includes all kinds of information needed for tourists. The question is no longer “whether to communicate” but what, how and when to say it, to whom and how often (Kotler and Keller, 2016). In the communication process the Internet plays a significant role. The task to marketers is to use digital marketing and electronic word-of-mouth to communicate to the target groups, but first of all the target groups have to be known.

The research presented in this study was the empirical research carried out in Dubrovnik in the postseason. The main aims were to identify the information sources (IoS) which were used most by cultural tourists “before” visiting the destination (internal IoS) and when they were “in” destination (external IoS) as well as to identify the most used tourism related webpages. Both, Dubrovnik as the area and the low season, have been chosen for research primary because Dubrovnik is an overcrowded destination which attempts to attract visitors to come out of the main season. The results were compared with the results of the other relevant surveys. The article starts with an introduction, followed by a section on the literature review, which is about internal and external IoS, with particular attention to the Internet and social media. In the third section there is a short description of the research methodology, followed by the section showing the results of the research and discussion of the findings.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Internal/External Information Sources

The information evaluation has become a core part of tourists' destination choice (Min-En et al., 2013), and several authors investigated the impact of IoS on the decision-making process of travel to the particular destination (Tarek and Akmal, 2013). Information search behaviour is a set of interrelated behaviours by one or more persons, no matter if it happened before the final choice of destination or in destination. The tourism information search includes internal and the multiple external IoS. The internal information is derived from previous experiences and past information searches (Ho et al., 2012) stored in an individual's long-term memory (feelings, experiences, etc.).

The multiple external IoS include information from destination-specific literature, the media, family and friends, word-of-mouth (WOM – regular and electronic, e-WOM), travel agencies, tourism exhibitions and fairs, tourism or non-tourism books or movies, information from local tourist boards/centres/guides, or just found in the infinity of the Internet. Interpersonal communication, where people share information, ideas, and opinions, is the

oldest form of communication. Known as WOM, this has been recognised as an important source of travel information (Pesonen and Pasanen, 2017). Family and friends are the oldest IoS based on WOM, and are considered from two points of view: those who live in the destination, and those who have visited the destination.

Destination specific literature, such as guidebooks and brochures, were always important additions to WOM, especially in the destination. For Nishimura et. al. (2007) the guidebooks satisfy functional and even hedonic needs. In the tourism industry brochures are a distinctive advertising medium having multifunctional purposes, orientated to persuading or conveying a more general interest focus on a specific market segment profile (Brito and Pratas, 2015). The media is also important in destination image formation and tourists' intentions to visit (Govers, Go and Kumar, 2007), and various types of media give people the desire to travel. Media could be divided into two different types: traditional based on the print media, radio, television and films, and new age media based on the development of the digital technologies.

Tourism related literature is becoming more and more oriented to the special issues connected with the importance and relevance of information on the Internet due to dissemination of rumours. The question is, which sources are the ones that someone can trust? Backer and Morrison (2015) assume that verbal information influences the customers' decision much more than any other form of marketing communication. For Cox et al. (2009) government-sponsored tourism websites are considered as credible sources for the tourists. Filieri et al. (2015) found out that quality information predicts source credibility, customer satisfaction, and website quality, and trust influences consumers' intention to follow other users' advice and to foster positive WOM.

2.2. The Internet as the Source of Information and the Role of the Social Media

Early studies of the Internet as an information source had a focus on the persons who searched for tourism information on the Internet and what kind of information they were looking for. Nowadays studies are focused on the role of various digital IoS, and how access to the Internet has affected information search patterns (Hays et al., 2013). The advantages of online tourism information search include the relatively low cost, customised information, ease of product comparison, interactivity, virtual community formation, and 24-hour accessibility (Wang et al., 2002). The Internet is the primary one among the technological advances in terms of affecting the leisure activities directly or indirectly. In this decade a lot of studies have been written about e-WOM, and the rapid growth of social media as an information source.

The main platforms used for the despatch and dissemination of information assigned to travellers and tourists are webpages of the different

national/local stakeholders in tourism. For Yoo and Kim (2013) the official state tourism websites have been a role of major IoT for journalists and tourists. Destination marketing organisations use the official websites to identify the target markets, to develop a positive destination image (Tan and Wu, 2016), to inform tourists about all issues that marketers could consider to be important for visitors, to promote the attractions/destination, and for brand building. Tseng et al. (2015) have been more interested in the e-WOM or travel blogs as a means of destination image formation. Mariani et al., (2016) explored how Italian regional DMOs employ Facebook to promote their destinations, and found that visual content and the average length of posts have a positive impact while post frequency has a negative impact on engagement.

Webpages of accommodation which can be found on the Internet are mostly collected on the travel-specific sites such as Booking.com, Airbnb.com, TripAdvisor, Hotels.com, Expedia, Trivago, Agoda.com, Ctrip, etc. On the webpages of the online travel agencies, and travel search brands, such as TripAdvisor, one can get travel advice about the destination, find friendly advice on travel-related topics about destination, and see reviews for restaurants and hotels, products and activities. Simply put, the answers to all questions someone has on their mind. Travellers share their experiences via comments and reviews, and businesses have an option to respond directly to the travellers.

Social media sites are produced by consumers to be shared among them. It may be defined as social websites providing the opportunity for participants to express themselves through online media, to communicate, to participate in groups, and to contribute with their opinion, comment and publications in this media (Altınay et al., 2017, towards Köksal and Özdemir, 2013); it encourages travel, creates intercultural interactions and alternative leisure, incites leisure activities, and facilitates making use of leisure (Aydin and Arslan, 2016).

It is evident that these online social networks revolutionising the business, commerce and marketing landscape allow the consumer to be more informative and interactive in contrast to traditional business, commerce and marketing (Song and Yoo, 2016). In fact, such social networks channels, including Facebook, placed the consumers in a more active role as market players and enabled them to reach (and be reached by) everyone, anywhere and anytime (Skiera et al., 2010).

People spend more time on social networks than on any other websites and their attitudes towards the advertisement on social networks are improving step by step (Choi and Kim, 2014). A large number of studies have focused on the impacts of social media consumption for travel planning and decision-making (Sidalı et al., 2012), and which types of online user-generated content travellers access (Tussyadiah and Fesenmaier, 2009). In their study Radu and Dobrescu (2014) aimed to create a conceptual model to determine the level of satisfaction experienced by tourists on the information found in the online environment. For Pesonen and Pasanen (2017) banners and social media do not seem to play an

important role in new customer acquisition, but search engine optimisation and content marketing, as well as product quality, are at the top of the list.

In the tourism related literature the IoS have been analysed by using different methodological approaches, such as Mokken Scale Analysis¹ to evaluate the scalability of IoS (Coromina and Camprubí, 2016), or multidimensional analysis of the IoS and its relevance for destination image formation (Llodrà-Riera et al., 2015). Several researches have been focused on identifying the most frequently used IoS (Llodrà-Riera et al., 2015); some make a difference between information sources and channels (Gronflaten, 2009); “formal” and “informal” IoS (Klenosky and Gitelson, 1998), and “organic” and “induced” IoS (Gunn, 1997).

Given the above, it could be concluded that the changed way of communications imposes the question of the relevance of information as crucial. The websites of the different national/local stakeholders in tourism seems to be considered as credible sources for the tourists, and it seems that social media are not. When trying to explain differences in travellers’ engagement with social media as the information source for vacation planning, studies have been traditionally focused on traveller characteristics, such as demographics (Xiang and Gretzel, 2010), and increasingly psychographics (Ayeh et al., 2013).

This paper goes theoretically forward investigating and connecting cultural tourists with the IoS “before” choosing the destination and “in” destination. It suggests that for destination marketing, especially for communication with existing and potential target groups, it is important to have different information about all issues relevant for tourists. Knowledge and understanding of preferred IoS used by leisure tourists may play a significant role in providing better inputs for effective marketing of destinations (Dey and Sarma, 2010).

3. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The empirical research, named “Culture Dubrovnik 2015” (CD15), focused on the cultural tourist demand in Dubrovnik with a special review on motivation to visit Dubrovnik and its cultural attractions/events. A survey was carried out in September and October 2015. The questionnaire design was adapted according to TOMAS, ATLAS and Eurobarometer (EB) surveys.² It had four parts: travel and accommodation facilities, motivation and satisfaction, experience of visit cultural attractions/events and Dubrovnik and socio-demographic profile. The focus in this article is on the results connected with cultural, ultimately heritage tourists, and the IoS.

¹ MSA technique is taken from psychology and applied in other fields such as education, marketing research, political science, economics, and medical research.

² For the rest of the article the word ‘survey’ will be omitted.

Two questions were asked regarding the IoS: “What sources of information did you consult about this area before you arrived here?”, “What sources of information did you consult after you arrived in Dubrovnik?”. In both questions respondents could choose between: articles in newspapers and magazines; previous visits; recommendations by family/friends; the Internet; tourist board, fairs and exhibitions; tour operator brochures/information; advice by travel agency or travel club; guide books; brochures, advertisements and posters; radio, TV, film or video. The respondents were also asked to mark which tourism webpages they mainly used on the Internet: webpages of accommodation, webpages of online travel agencies (TripAdvisor, Expedia, Adriatica.net, Holidaycheck.de. etc.), social networks (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, My Space, blogs. etc.), and Croatian Tourist board's webpages.

There is still not enough literature which shows the relationship between the sources of information and the motive to choose a certain destination. Specifically, there are no studies at all which connect the sources of information “before” visiting a destination, and “in” destination, with heritage as being the main motive to visit that destination. This has been done in this research and is presented in this study. Therefore, the aims of the empirical research were:

- to identify the IoS which were mostly used by leisure travellers “before” visiting the destination, and when they were “in” destination (Dubrovnik),
- to identify the most used tourism related webpages,
- to identify heritage tourists among the group of all respondents,
- to identify the IoS which were mostly used by the heritage tourists (where the main reason for visiting Dubrovnik was “Visiting cultural heritage/events”) “before” visiting the destination, and when they were “in” destination.

All this information is needed for the destination marketing organisations to achieve better access to a target group, but also to create bespoke products, and to communicate all the details about a product or ‘basket of services’ for the tourists in a destination. The empirical research was deliberately not carried out in the museums, the galleries, at the entrance to the City Walls, at churches or at cultural events. This was so that the results could be more relevant. The population which was not included in the process of collecting data were domicile inhabitants and day visitors (transit visitors, cruise visitors, stopover visitors, and other day visitors).

The target population were tourists who had been accommodated in hotels (76%) and in private accommodation (24%) in Dubrovnik. Subjects were selected using simple random sampling and in total 320 questionnaires were distributed, out of which 211 were correctly filled in. Excel and SPSS 11.0 software were used to process the data, and the results are presented in the tables as percentages so that they can be compared with the previously mentioned, relevant surveys as much as it is possible.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1. Sources of Information and the Internet as a Source of Information

Finally, 211 surveys were correctly filled in and have been used in the analysis. According to CD15 the majority of respondents were in the age group 20-29, 26%; high educated 74%; they stayed for more than three nights, 76%; their occupation was professional, 37%; they lived in cities with more than 100 000 inhabitants, 60%; it was their first visit to Dubrovnik, 81%; they have come with a "spouse/partner", 55%, (Appendix Table 1a). These values show that all respondents were cultural tourists, when comparing this data with the main features of the cultural tourists which can be found in ATLAS 2007, ATLAS 2008-2013, TOMAS '08, and partly in tourism related literature.

As an information source the Internet was dominant for 54% of the respondents before visiting Dubrovnik, followed by recommendations from family and friends. For 31% of respondents the Internet was the most important information source while being in Dubrovnik, followed by the Tourist Information Centre (TIC) (Table 1). The results are not surprising because according to TOMAS the Internet was the most important IoS in 2017 not only for Dubrovnik but also for Dubrovnik-Neretva County (DNC) (up from 37% in 2010 to 52% in 2017.). But in EB recommendations from family and friends were the most common choice until 2014 in the range between 51% and 58% of the respondents. The Internet was the second choice for 46% of the respondents in 2014, and the most important for the inhabitants of Finland, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.³

³ In 2015 the results of the use of the internet in EB could not be compared with CD15 as IoS because they had split webpages into three parts

Table 1

The sources of information and the Internet as a source of information “Before visiting” and “In” Dubrovnik⁴

The sources of information	“Before”		“In”	
	TOMAS ⁵		CD15	CD15
	2010	2014		
Brochures, advertisements and posters	24.0	21.7	0.5	10.1
Guide books			4.8	10.6
Tour operator brochures and information			1	7.7
Articles in newspapers and magazines	12.9	19.4	6.7	1.5
Radio, TV, film or video	8.3	11.4	-	1.4
Recommendations by family/friends	41.6	38.3	21.6	2.9
Tourist Board, fairs and exhibitions	4.8	3.9	1.9	
Advice by travel agency or travel club	12.5	5.8	2.9	
Internet	38.7	44.8	54.3	31.4
<i>Web page of accommodation</i>	<i>46.8</i>	<i>34.2</i>	<i>25.4</i>	
<i>Online travel agencies</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>80.6</i>	<i>59.4</i>	
<i>Social networks</i>	<i>30.1</i>	<i>78.1</i>	<i>4.6</i>	
<i>Croatian Tourism board's webpages</i>	<i>41.8</i>	<i>36.4</i>	<i>10.6</i>	
Previous visits	15.2	19.9	6.3	
No need for any information	4.5	5.9		
TIC				25.1
Tour guide				9.2

The first time TOMAS split the question about the Internet as an information source was in 2010,⁶ and that model was used in CD15 to find out which websites are preferred (Table 1). The trend in TOMAS 2010, 2014, and 2017 for DNC, shows a reduction of 15% for the Croatian Tourist boards webpages (national and local), while webpages for accommodation increased by 10%, as the most important IoS. The social networks as IoS rose for 40% in 2017, and have become the most important IoS. Online travel agencies rose from 24% to 51% in 2017. According to CD15 online travel agencies, with 59%, were the most popular IoS on the Internet (Table 1). On this question the respondents were those who only used the Internet as a source of information.

⁴ Respondents could choose more than one answer in TOMAS but just one in CD15. Punctuation mark “-” means the percentage of the answers <0.5%.

⁵ The results are only for Dubrovnik.

⁶ They did it by county in the Republic of Croatia, and separate data for DNC.

The increasing use of the Internet from the demand side could be seen: in the process of planning vacations and choosing a destination, booking accommodation and transport; to investigate the possibilities for trips and activities in the destination; buying and online payment of almost all expenditures, reserving tickets for different events. The use of social networks has also increased and includes uploading trip photos and videos, tweeting or blogging about trips, updating posts on Facebook and other websites, leaving comments and reviews on specialised travel websites. There is no doubt that the rapid growth in the number of Internet users makes it impossible to predict the development of possibilities for users and for marketing.

In the CD15 respondents were also asked to write their suggestions/opinions about missing attractions/events/activities in Dubrovnik. Analysis of this question shows the lack of information about the history of the city and attractions, even information from recent history (for example ex-Yugoslavia and Croatia, and the war for Croatian independence), missing tourist information and tourist centres. Also, the set of questions were about the experiences of visited cultural attractions/events and Dubrovnik. The respondents were satisfied (74% to 76%) with the information about cultural attractions/events, and the quality of the marking of the sites, although according to TOMAS it could definitely be better.

4.2. Cultural/Heritage Tourists

The results have shown that all respondents were cultural tourists when comparing with the main features of the cultural tourists in the literature and in the other researches. Culture, as the motive which influenced someone to travel, is in the top five reasons to travel (EB). According to ATLAS, cultural holidays were the most common type. In EB Cultural Heritage (2017) more than two-thirds of the participants answered that the presence of cultural heritage influenced their holiday destination. In TOMAS “visiting cultural attractions/events” is one of the top six motives for visiting not only Dubrovnik but also DNC. Generally, the level of education has increased in recent decades, travellers are from the economically developed countries, they have a profession that allows them to manage their work/free time, and they have higher income.

All mentioned items require a question: Aren't these items characteristic for all visitors not just for cultural tourists? Considering that they are characteristics for all visitors it can be concluded that the level of education and profession doesn't really identify 'cultural' or 'heritage' tourist. They can be identified by the psychographic segmentation, because the researchers, when attempting to provide a working definition for 'tourist' or 'tourism', commonly relate to the motives for the travel (Leiper, 1979). 'True' cultural tourism is represented by tourists who travel because of the motive which they say is 'cultural' (Richards, 1996). The stratification of tourist demand related to motives for the travel shows that 38% had the main motive “Visiting cultural

heritage/events” (VCH) for visiting Dubrovnik and 24% of the respondents took “cultural/religious” holidays.⁷

Table 2

Correlation of the age, length of stay and level of education with the main motive to visit Dubrovnik and a reason for going on holiday

	Main motive to visit Dubrovnik	Reason for going on holiday
Sociodemographic profile of the visitors/ The features of the travel and accommodation	Visiting cultural heritage/events (%)	Cultural/religious (%)
Age		
20-29	22.8	16
30-39	19	24
40-49	10.1	16
50-59	17.7	20
60+	30.4	24
Length of stay		
One night	4	2
1 to 3	25.3	30.6
3 to 5	28	28.6
6 to 8	34.7	32.7
9 to 13	6.7	6,1
14+	1.3	-
Level of education		
Secondary school	25.7	28.2
College&university degree	32.4	26.1
PhD&more	41.9	45.7

It could be said that 38% of the respondents in Dubrovnik in September and October 2015 were not only cultural tourists but also heritage tourists. The cross tabulation for cultural tourists (age, length of stay, level of education) with the main motive to visit Dubrovnik, VCH, and with a type of holiday “Culture/religion” shows as it follows in Table 2. Analysing the Table 2 it can be noticed that heritage tourists in Dubrovnik in postseason have the same features as cultural tourists except one value – the age group of heritage tourists. The largest single age group of heritage tourists, with VCH as the main motive to visit Dubrovnik, is 60+. According to ATLAS and CD15 cultural tourists are in the largest single age group 20-29.

⁷ More facts about motivation can be found in Karamehmedovic 2017, 2018.

According to EB, 2013-2016 citizens in the age group 55+ preferred to travel in preseason and postseason, and citizens from cities with more than 100 000 inhabitants preferred to visit the destination again because of the cultural/historical attractions. Cultural/historical attractions were the reason to visit the destination again for 35% of the high educated respondents (EB), and 79% (ATLAS). Towards TOMAS '08 70% of cultural tourists had a stay of more than four nights. According to CD15 18% had a profession related to culture, and according to ATLAS 28% (ATLAS, 2008-2013).

4.3. Heritage Tourists and Sources of Information Before Arriving and in Destination

The question is, which IoS are important for heritage tourists before they visit Dubrovnik, and once they are in Dubrovnik? The results show that the most important information source before visiting Dubrovnik is the Internet for 53% of the heritage tourists (Table 3). Other percentage values are almost the same between all respondents and the heritage tourists. In the destination for heritage tourists the Internet has the highest share, 32%, as an information source, and the second is a TIC with 24%. The results clearly indicate that 'old' IoS in destination, such as TIC, tour guides and written information, still play an important role in informing visitors. It could be said that local sources are relevant, useful, and probably trustful.

According to ATLAS 2008-2013 the information source most frequently used to find out about the destination is the Internet (37%) closely followed by family and friends (35%). Once in the destination, family and friends were the paramount IoS (24%) followed by TIC (21%). In EB Cultural Heritage 2017 more than half (55%) have used the Internet in the last twelve months for at least one of a range of cultural heritage purposes. The most common activities were looking up general information relating to cultural heritage, such as the accessibility, facilities and main features of a museum, historical monument, or traditional event in preparation for a visit or a holiday (31%). Almost one quarter (23%) used the Internet for purchasing or booking services for events or activities, such as tickets, guided tours, etc. Very often activity (21%) is viewing cultural heritage-related content, such as the description of a work of art or historical monument during a visit, historical information about traditional events which they want to attend, etc.

Table 3

The sources of information “Before visiting” and “In” Dubrovnik for heritage tourists – CD15⁸

The sources of information	“Before”	“In”
Brochures, advertisements and posters	1.3	10.3
Guide books	3.8	12.7
Tour operator brochures/information	-	7.7
Articles in newspapers and magazines	6.4	-
Radio, TV, film or video	-	1.3
Recommendations by family/friends	20.5	1.3
Tourist Board, fairs and exhibitions	2.6	
Advice by travel agency or travel club	5.1	
Internet	52.6	32.1
Previous visits	7.7	
No need for any information		
TIC		24.3
Tour guide		10.3

The results of CD15 could be compared with Dey and Sarma (2010) study. They investigated the usage of IoS among various motivation-based segments of travellers to the newly emerging tourism destinations of India’s North-East using a factor-cluster segmentation. They found that the Nature-loving Vacationers and the Change Seekers mostly relied on friends/relatives to seek information, while the Nature-loving Explorers came to know about North-East destinations through travel intermediaries. They also pointed out that the IoS vary based on the type of destination being marketed: well-known, or relatively lesser-known destination.

Dubrovnik, as a well-known tourist destination, attracts visitors primarily with its built heritage such as the Old City, the City Walls, churches, monuments and narrow streets. Although the low season can provide a better experience of the Old City than the top of the season, the offer of culture events is significantly poorer. In the suggestions/opinions about missing attractions/events/activities in Dubrovnik most complaints were addressed to ‘missing night life and clubs’. Speaking about IoS and knowing, according to the results, that tourists in the postseason prefer to visit the built heritage, dominant sources can be used to improve visibility, to attract and to promote other built heritage which ultimately leads towards sustainability of the heritage.

⁸ Punctuation mark “-“ means the percentage of the answers <0.5%.

4. CONCLUSION

The economy of information has changed every aspect of life, the concepts of the space, time and volume. The digital revolution enables businesses to be in virtual space without any kind of physical space. Many products have changed their forms such as books, music, and movies. Web stores and online shopping, with products being delivered to the door, and online paying, are just a few examples of how our purchasing and lives have changed. Information is available in real time without any expense. With just a tablet or smartphone in the hand users can find products they are looking for, destinations they want to visit, activities in which they want to be involved, events they want to be part of.

The main results show the domination of Internet and the webpages of the online travel agencies were the most popular source of information. All respondents could be named as cultural tourists when comparing this data with the main features of the cultural tourists which can be found in the relevant surveys. Deeper analysis of this 'niche research' shows that 24% of the respondents take "cultural/religious" holidays and 38% have the main motive for visiting Dubrovnik "Visiting cultural heritage/events," so they could be called heritage tourists. For them, in postseason 2015, the most important information source before visiting Dubrovnik was the Internet, 53%, followed by recommendations by family/friends, 21%. In Dubrovnik the Internet has the highest share, 32%, as the information source and the second is a TIC, 24%.

Generally, in the economic theory, as well as in the tourism theory, since the mid-80s the emphasis has been on creating and adding to the value of the product/destination so that the competitive advantage can be achieved and kept. Cultural tourists are more educated, and earn and spend more money on holidays. They are seeking active holidays and experiences, something special to be remembered, the 'wow effect'. Creating and adding value imply that value is important for the tourist, the value is higher than in the other destinations, and the value has to be even higher than tourists are expecting. For Dubrovnik and other overcrowded destinations which attempt to attract visitors to come out of the main season digital technology and digital marketing have to be combined with core human values to generate abundance for all stakeholders.

Innovative and creative ideas and products are appreciated but all stakeholders in destinations should work together to create a quality destination product. The best way to make such a product is to investigate what tourists really need, want, and especially what their expectations are, followed by investigation of the experience and the satisfaction with a product/destination/activity. This information is needed for the marketing information system where relevant information from the market has to be continuously collected, saved, processed, and available to marketers for marketing decisions. So, it can be concluded that this paper suggests, even recommends, that researches from different fields of tourist demand are needed. The more information destination marketing

organisations have, better quality in all segments of the tourism offer can be achieved.

However, speaking about researches in the social sciences there are always some limitations. First of all, it is the human factor, potential bias and subjectivity as well as possibilities of misunderstanding questions, and missing motivation to be involved in the survey. In spite of the mentioned limitations, the results can be used in the destination marketing. The virtual environment offers huge opportunities to the customer segmentation and to market profiling; to choose a target group; to create an almost personalised/niche product; to promote the attractions/destination etc. The Internet allows communications with the visitors, and most importantly, allows for feedback in real-time so the tourism marketers can create and improve the relationship with potential and/or regular guests. It is crucial because two main factors of the quality and success of the modern destination product are quality of all its segments (items and peoples), and quality of the communication.

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APPENDIX

Table 1a

Sociodemographic profile of the visitors and features of the travel and accommodation

Sociodemographic profile of the visitors		The features of the travel and accommodation	
Demographical factors	%	Features	%
Gender		Frequency of visiting destination	
Female	56.7	The first visit	81.3
Male	43.3	Second visit	9.1
Age		3 to 5	6.7
20-29	26.1	6+	1.4
30-39	22.3	I'm here almost every summer	1.4
40-49	11.4	Accommodation	
50-59	19.4	Hotels	76
60+	20.9	Private accommodation	24
Level of Education		Length of stay	
Secondary school	26	One night	1.5
College&university degree	64.2	1 to 3	22.4
PhD&more	9.8	3 to 5	27.3
Occupation		6 to 8	39
Professional (doctor, lawyer, teacher, etc)	37.3	9 to 13	7.3
Housewife/retired	16.7	14+	2.4
Director/manager	12	Travel party	
Clerical/administration	9.6	Spouse/partner	55
Service and sales personnel	8.6	Friends	19.4
Other	16	Family/relatives	14.2
Profession related to culture		I travel alone	7.1
Yes	17.6	Tour group	3.8
No	82.4	Colleagues	0.5
Country of origin			
UK	37.9		
USA	6.6		
Canada	6.2		
Australia	3.3		

Russia	3.3		
Other	42.7		
Size of the place of the residence			
City: more than 100000 inhabitants	59.7		
Town: 10001-100000 inhabitants	23.3		
Smaller town or village: 2001-10000 inhabitants	11.2		
Rural area; less than 2000 inhabitants	5.8		

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KULTURNI TURISTI I IZVORI INFORMACIJA**Sažetak**

Razvoj novih tehnologija ubrzano mijenja oblike komunikacije posebno u ovom stoljeću. Virtualni svijet donosi mnoge prednosti za sve dionike u turizmu. Svrha ovoga članka bila je identifikacija glavnih izvora informiranja kulturnih turista koji posjećuju Dubrovniku u sezoni i to prije same posjete i za vrijeme boravka u Dubrovniku. Empirijsko istraživanje provedeno je u rujnu i listopadu 2015., a analizirani su rezultati za 211 posjetitelja. Rezultati pokazuju dominaciju Interneta kao izvora informacija. Doprinos ovog rada je u selektivnom pristupu (niche approach) samog istraživanja koje se očituje u povezivanju ciljne grupe, kulturnih turista, s izvorima informacija. Rezultati se mogu upotrijebiti za potrebe destinacijskog marketinga. Internet pruža mnoge mogućnosti marketinškim ekspertima posebno u području komunikacija jer mogu vrlo brzo dobiti povratnu informaciju. To je ključno jer su dva glavna čimbenika kvalitete modernog destinacijskog proizvoda kvaliteta svih njegovih segmenata (proizvodi i ljudi) i kvaliteta komunikacije.

Ključne riječi: izvori informacija, Internet, kulturni/baštinski turisti, ciljno tržište, Dubrovnik.

JEL klasifikacija: Z10, Z30, Z33.