

Direct marketing, presence on social networks of hotel enterprises in Kosovo

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Abstract

The main purpose of this paper is to analyze and clarify how direct marketing is and how should be developed through the presence on social networks in hotel enterprises.

Direct marketing is a process of direct communication between enterprises and consumers to achieve customer feedback and stimulate a positive attitude towards the company's products and services. We are living in a digital world and through social media this communication can be achieved. A social network is a website or other application wherein people with similar interests come together to communicate. Knowing that the main social media platforms on the Internet are Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, then our research is also based on these three platforms. The research was done online and the quantitative method was used. The sample is from hotels that operate in Kosovo. The research process is based on the presence of hotels in the three social networks and the comparison between them. The measuring elements used in the questionnaire are: number of comments, number of posts, engagement, fans, interactivity, daily posting, reactions, comments and distribution and number of likes. Based on our findings, the hotel enterprises of our country should increase their posts on a daily basis and increase the number of fans. By increasing these two elements then we will have positive implications for the other elements as well. If this is achieved then we will have a greater and more direct communication between potential customers and hotel enterprises. This results in the development of direct marketing in these enterprises through social networks.

Keywords: direct marketing, social networks, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter.

Introduction

Traditional marketing is not dead! People watch TV, although the prevailing advertisements are from mobile phone service providers, car manufacturers, insurance companies and shopping centers. People still listen to the radio, read newspapers and magazines. They can hear and see certain advertisements. Direct mail and brochures are still successful for some companies. However, more and more, we are living in a digital world. Today we receive news from online newspapers and magazines. We visit websites and social networking sites to learn about the companies and products that they offer them. Ten years ago, various travelers and visitors would enter a travel agency and the agent was the one who influenced their decision-making process, while today they are completely independent and very informed in choosing a hotel. Reviews available to the public are everywhere, from the main travel pages to the websites of the hotels themselves. Everything is transparent: good, bad and ugly. If we consider the chains of the biggest hotels in the world, such as: Hyatt Hotels, Hilton Worldwide and Premier Inn, all these companies have their own pages on social networks and have a strong presence in these networks. As result of this it follows

that regardless of what service we offer, we have a national or international reach, the application of direct marketing by applying the presence on social networks should be part of the plan of each enterprise.

The main purpose of this paper is to analyze and clarify how direct marketing is and should be developed through the presence on social networks in hotel enterprises.

Literature review

The development of e-commerce and social networking has given the hotel industry a big boost - not only when it comes to finding, booking and managing of accommodation, customer service or online recommendations, but also direct marketing of hotels on social media. Direct marketing is a process of direct communication between selected enterprises and consumers, in order to achieve immediate customer response and stimulate a positive attitude towards the company's products and services (Veseli, Ramadani, & Rexhepi, 2010). According to (Tech Target, 2019), a social network, using technology, is a website or other application where people with similar interests come together to communicate. Social media marketing is a way of interacting between businesses and the target market through various online social networking platforms (Ward, 2018). Based on certain research, the main platforms of social networks are:

Facebook (Rouse, 2019) is a free social network that allows registered users to create profiles, upload photos and videos, send messages and keep in touch with friends, family and colleagues, all of which also applies to business. This platform was launched in 2004.

Instagram (Tech Target, 2019) is a free, online photo sharing app and social networking platform that was launched by Facebook in 2012.

Twitter (Tech Target, 2019) is a social network microblogging service that allows registered members to broadcast short posts called tweets.

If we rely on the latest statistics of the London-based company "We Are Social" (WeAreSocial, 2019), there are 7.67 billion people in the world, of which 5.11 billion are mobile phone users, 4.33 billion are Internet users, and 3.48 billion are active network users, social from which 3.25 billion use social networks from their mobile devices. As the main social networking platforms are Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Based on statistics published in January 2019 by (WeAreSocial, 2019) we have this state of active users on the following platforms: Facebook 2.27 billion, Instagram 1.00 billion and Twitter 326 million.

In Kosovo (DataReportal, 2019) live 1.91 million inhabitants, of which 1.86 million are mobile phone users, 1.68 million Internet users, 870 thousand active users of social networks where 770 thousand use social networks from their mobile devices. From (DataReportal, 2019) we have the following statistics for social network users in Kosovo: Facebook 780 thousand active users, Instagram 580 thousand active users and Twitter 65 thousand active users. As can be seen from the statistics presented above, marketing and direct communication through social networks has a great potential for hotel enterprises.

Methodology

Based on the purpose of the study to analyze and clarify how direct marketing is and how should be developed through the presence on social networks in hotel enterprises, the study methodology is built. Quantitative method has been used. Our research was done online through the Internet using the website www.fanpagekarma.com. This website serves for the professional management of social networks: by analyzing, publishing, communicating, researching and presenting, all of these online.

According to (Hays & Wood, 2011), researchers, scholars use intentional samples and certainly choose participants who best fit the purpose of the study. The sample is from hotels that operate in Kosovo. The selection of hotels is made by the website www.booking.com, which is one of the most popular websites for the presentation and booking of online hotels. In Kosovo (Sahiti, 2019) according to statistics are registered as hotels 214 units. The research scope is in the 7 largest cities of Kosovo, selecting two hotels from each city and that, the first hotels that appear on the website www.booking.com from our most famous city search. The questions were designed for the purpose of the study. The research time includes August 2019.

How much these enterprises are present on social networks and use it for marketing, then based on this finding our research is based on the following questions:

- How much is the presence of hotels on the social network Facebook and the comparison between them?
- How much is the presence of hotels on the social network Instagram and the comparison between them? and
- How much is the presence of hotels on the social network Twitter and the comparison between them?

Result of the research

The research process is based on getting the answer from the three questions mentioned above, namely the presence of hotels in the three social networks and the comparison between them. The measuring elements used in the questionnaire are: number of comments, number of posts, engagement, fans, interactivity, daily posting, reactions, comments and distribution and number of likes.

Table 1 Presence and management of Facebook pages by hotels

	Page	Network	No. of comments	No. of posts	Engagement	Fans	Interactivity	Daily posts	Reactions, comments & shares	No. of likes
1	ABI-Hotel	FACEBOOK	2	4	0.06%	3675	0.5%	0.12	72	65
2	Amazona Hotel	FACEBOOK	7	8	0.04%	27852	0.17%	0.24	367	350
3	Astoria Luxury & Spa Hotel	FACEBOOK	7	15	0.31%	13627	0.68%	0.45	1347	1254
4	Hotel Amsterdam	FACEBOOK	0	0	0.0%	2377	0.0%	0.00	0	0
5	Hotel Çarshia e Jupave	FACEBOOK	0	0	0.0%	9853	0.0%	0.00	0	0
6	Hotel Dardani, Mitrovica	FACEBOOK	1	2	0.32%	745	5.35%	0.06	77	72
7	Hotel Dukagjini	FACEBOOK	7	12	0.07%	22182	0.19%	0.36	495	465
8	Hotel Lybeten	FACEBOOK	0	0	0.0%	4469	0.0%	0.00	0	0
9	Hotel Peja	FACEBOOK	0	0	0.0%	7699	0.0%	0.00	0	0
10	Hotel Real Prishtina	FACEBOOK	0	0	0.0%	2657	0.0%	0.00	0	0
11	Premium Park Hotel	FACEBOOK	0	23	1.57%	1825	2.47%	0.70	1010	987
12	RUBIS Boutique Hotel	FACEBOOK	0	10	0.14%	670	0.48%	0.30	31	30
13	Swiss Diamond Hotel Prishtina	FACEBOOK	16	48	1.94%	1231	1.39%	1.45	794	695
14	Vali Ranch Resort & Congress Center	FACEBOOK	9	14	0.07%	54643	0.19%	0.42	1420	1328
		Mezararja	3.5	9.7	0.32%	10965	0.82%	0.29	401	375

Source: Research by the author

Table 1 presents the results, a total of 14 hotels that have been part of our research, from which 5 hotels, although they have a good presence on this social network, have not been very active during the month.

The number of comments is dominated by the hotel with number 13 with a total of 16, up to hotels that have not had any comments, the average of comments is 3.5. The largest number of posts is 48 to no posts, the average is 9.7 posts. The highest percentage of engagement is in the number 13 hotel, which is 1.94% and the average is 0.32%. We have the most fans at the hotel with number 14 which are 54643 fans, the average 10965 fans. The hotel with number 6 leads with 5.35% interactivity and the average is 0.82%. 1.45 posts per day leads the hotel with number 13, the average is 0.29. In the element of reactions, comments and distribution with 1420 leads the hotel with number 14, the average here is 401. Also, in the number of likes leads the hotel with number 14 with 1328 likes and the average is 375 likes in a month.

Page	Network	No. of comments	No. of posts	Engagement	Fans	Interactivity	Daily posts	Reactions, comments & shares	No. of likes
1	ABI Hotel	0	1.0	0.01%	5477	0.28%	0.04	15	15
2	Amazona Hotel	3	4.0	0.54%	1710	3.76%	0.14	252	249
3	Astoria Luxury & SPA Hotel	1	7.0	1.14%	1707	4.57%	0.25	529	528
4	Hotel Čaršhia e Jupave	4	3.0	0.97%	482	9.06%	0.11	129	125
5	Hotel Dardani	0	2.0	1.52%	281	21.24%	0.07	117	117
6	Hotel Lybeten	0	0.0	0.0%	696	0.8%	0.00	0	0
7	Premium Park Hotel	3	18.0	5.59%	572	8.69%	0.64	877	874
8	Rubis Boutique Hotel	0	10.0	1.04%	393	2.92%	0.36	112	112
9	Hotel Dukagjini	1	8.0	0.75%	1491	2.63%	0.29	306	305
10	Swiss Diamond Hotel Prishtina	24	35.0	1.54%	3529	1.23%	1.25	1493	1469
11	VALI RANCH Congress Center	0	3.0	0.33%	3670	3.04%	0.11	327	327
	Mesatarja	3.3	8.3	1.22%	1819	5.22%	0.30	378	375

Table 2 Presence and management of Instagram pages by hotels

Source: Research by the author

Table 2 presents the results, where we have a smaller number of hotels that have an open account on this social network, out of 14 hotels we have only 11 hotels. Where 1 hotel, although it has a good presence on this social network, has not been very active during the month.

The number of comments is dominated by the hotel with number 10 with a total of 24, until the hotels that have not had any comments, the average of comments is 3.3. The largest number of posts is 35 to no posts, the average is 8.3 posts. The highest percentage of engagement is in the hotel with number 7 which is 5.59% and the average is 1.22%. We have the most fans in the hotel with number 1, which is 5477 fans, the average 1819 fans. The hotel with number 4 leads with 21.24% interactivity and the average is 0.82%. 1.25 posts per day leads the hotel with number 10, the average is 0.30. In the case of reactions, comments and distribution with 1493, the hotel with number 10 leads, the average here is 378. In the number of likes, the hotel with number 9 leads with 1469 likes and the average is 375 likes in a month.

As for the social network Twitter, we have only four open accounts, three of which have only been opened and are not active, while one is active and has not had any activity in the last month.

Conclusions and recommendations

Based on the literature review and research results we come to the conclusion that the

hotel enterprises involved in the research develop a poor presence on social networks. If in our country we have 780 thousand active users of the social network Facebook, the research shows an average of 11 thousand fans, which is only 14%. This is only for the national market and not to mention the international market. When it comes to comments we have 3.5 comments per month, 10 posts in a month i.e. we have 0.30 posts per day. The average number of likes per month is 375, where considering the number of sympathizers is very small. Also considering that on the social network Instagram we have 580 thousand active users in our country, our research shows this situation, we have an average of 3.3 comments. The number of posts per month is 8.3, while the number of daily posts is 0.30. The average of sympathizers is 1819 expressed in percentage we have only 0.30% of active users. Considering the number of fans, the number of likes is much better than on the social network Facebook, but it is very small compared to the potential market. As for the social network Twitter or 62 thousand active users in our country are almost forgotten and have no communication at all.

Based on our findings, we recommend that our country's hotel companies should: Increase their most basic daily posts and increase the number of fans on the social networks Facebook and Instagram. By increasing these two elements then we will have implications for other elements as well, such as: increasing the number of comments, increasing the number of likes, increasing interactivity, we will have more reactions and distribution. They should also be present on the social network Twitter, where they can add another 62 thousand potential customers within our country, not counting 326 million worldwide. If this is achieved then we will have a greater and more direct communication between potential customers and hotel enterprises. This results in the development of direct marketing in these enterprises through social networks.

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