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in Tourism & Hospitality

**The importance of internet marketing communication in
event tourism. Case study: EXIT festival**

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism is the act of travel for the purpose of recreation and leisure and it also refers to the provision of services to achieve this goal. It is often mistakenly considered a creation of the modern society, but in fact its roots can be noticed even during the ancient times. It has evolved along with the socio-economic development of society and it has blossomed since the middle of the 20th century. The first effect of tourism that the society noticed was the economic effect. Nevertheless, nowadays it is completely clear that this is not its only significance. Other aspects, such as social, political, educational and great number of more have gained their well deserved place in the tourism literature.

As the number of tourists worldwide is rising, so do their expectations and needs for specific experiences. There lays the role of events and their significance in modern tourism. Events are not only one of the most important parts of tourism, but also inseparable part of human society. They are global phenomena which is gaining greater and greater importance through the event industry.

There are a number of different types of events in the world and there are more arising every year. Under these circumstances, the key role of success of certain event lies in appropriate marketing. Achieving the purpose of any event depends heavily on marketing, regardless of the diverse purposes of the events. In addition, as the patterns of social environment change, as well as the way audiences spend their leisure time, marketing should follow and respond to these changes.

Marketing is the key essence for business success of any organization and is therefore one of the leading business branches. It is often equated with the promotion, or even more specifically, with advertising on television and other media. However, the role of marketing is much greater and contemporary marketing has changed significantly in comparison to its beginnings. Nowadays, instead of the term “promotion”, most of the marketing professionals opt for a more comprehensive term “integrated marketing communications”, which include all promotional elements of the marketing mix, that is, means of communication between an organization and its target market. In addition, internet marketing communication, the newest addition to the integrated marketing communications mix, has taken over the leading role in every successful marketing strategy.

Before the popularisation of Internet for marketing purposes, there were many different ways for the events to advertise, in different media such as radio, TV, newspapers, magazines, as well as via telemarketing or pamphlets. Usually the goal was to get an event's name communicated to as many people as possible for the smallest price possible. When the Internet arose, a number of search options became available and marketing has changed significantly compared to its beginnings. Due to the technologies available today, events now have the option to advertise themselves on a larger scale and create global campaigns. Today events use the Internet as one of the most powerful tools in a big number of ways. The Internet has unlocked a large number of search options and that way it redefined the marketing, giving even small events a chance to promote and brand their programme on a larger scale.

EXIT music festival, the case study of this paper, is the biggest music festival in Serbia. Despite very hard social circumstances under which it was created, it has become a significant European festival thanks to the readiness of a younger generation to set high standards for themselves and persist in that intention. During its 14 years of existence, the festival has actively fought for human rights, the rights of young people and for a better, organized way of life. Through all of its activities and campaigns, both in the promotional period and during the festival's realization, EXIT has been effortlessly trying to actively influence the quality of life of young people in Serbia and to rely on their readiness for new things and their creative potential. It has tremendously effected the development of Serbian tourism and has therefore been selected as the case study of this paper. The paper offers research on importance of internet marketing communication for EXIT festival.

1. Subject of the research

The subject of this paper is to present the role of events in contemporary tourism, as well as the role of integrated marketing communications that the event marketers use in order to inform and influence the attitudes and behaviour of their target market and persuade as many of them as possible to visit the events. In addition, internet marketing communication as the newest and nowadays the most important part of the integrated marketing communications mix is thoroughly described, as well as all of its individual elements. Internet marketing communication leads potential visitors through the process of decision making and its role is to convince them to visit the event as soon as possible and without considering and thinking about the competition. Harmonized, consistent and unambiguous message of all the parts of the integrated marketing communications mix must be forwarded to the right segment in the right way.

2. Goals of the research

Scientific goal of this paper is to define events - their origins, classification, tourist value, impacts and outcomes; to define the concept of integrated marketing communications - their elements and roles in marketing of events, particularly music festivals, as well as to define internet marketing communication - its origins and the most important attributes and elements. The role of its most important element - social media marketing is thoroughly described as well. Marketing affects all aspects of event management and therefore it holds the key role of every event's success. Proper marketing implementation in the organization of events involves integration of marketing theories, approaches and strategies. This is necessary in order to achieve the objectives of any event, which is high quality of the program of event and high attendance.

Social goal of this paper is to understand the roles and importance of events and integrated marketing communications used in their organisation, the nature and use of internet marketing communication and all of its parts, as well as understanding the basic steps in the development of effective communication with the audience. In addition, this paper offers the research on the main reason for visiting the EXIT festival.

3. Benefits of the research

Considering the fact that there are countless events and that their number is constantly rising, event organizers will benefit from understanding the contemporary trends of the event marketing, especially the internet marketing communication. The organizations should incorporate their knowledge into the planning and implementation of events, which will allow the organizers achieve their goals. Such efforts will help expand the audience and support the development of the community culture. In addition, the results of the research conducted offer insight into the successful implementation of internet marketing strategy which can help all the event organizers expand their audiences.

4. Hypotheses of the research

General hypothesis:

Internet marketing communication is the most important part of every modern marketing strategy and has overcome the importance of the traditional media marketing communication.

Specific hypotheses:

1. Events have multiple benefits for tourism of the host community. Every destination that wishes to enhance its tourist attractiveness should carefully plan its event tourism strategy.

2. The concept of integrated marketing communications is nowadays an indispensable way to communicate with the target market and well planned integrated marketing communications strategy is crucial for the successful launch of an event.

3. Social media platforms are the main source of information for the majority of EXIT festival visitors.

4. Facebook is the most important social network which attracts the largest number of domestic and foreign visitors to EXIT festival.

5. The methods of the research

To test the above hypothesis in line with the main objective of this work, appropriate methods were used. To collect the relevant data and facts, the following methods were used: theoretical analysis, processing and analysis of data obtained from research, deductive method, comparative method, causal method, and descriptive method.

6. The structure of the research

The introduction of this paper outlines information about the subject, goals and benefits of the study, establishes the general and specific hypotheses and lists the methods used in this paper.

The first chapter of this paper is dedicated to events. It contains information about events' origins, their definition and classification, their tourist value, impacts and outcomes. It also explains the concepts of the portfolio approach and its proper application, event tourism and strategic planning in event tourism.

The second chapter of this paper is devoted to the creation and development of the concept of integrated marketing communications and their role in event promotion. It points out the factors that brought about the emergence of the concept and explains individually each element of the IMC concept – advertising, direct marketing, publicity, public relations, sales promotion and personal selling.

The third chapter of this paper is dedicated to internet marketing communication. It contains information about its origins and most important attributes. It also explains the individual elements of the internet marketing strategy – websites, banner ads, pop-ups, search engines and their optimization, pay-per-click ads and email marketing.

The fourth chapter of this paper is devoted to the largest and the most important element of the internet marketing communication – social media platforms. It explains individually all the most important social media platforms – Facebook, Twitter, Instagram,

Google+, YouTube, blogs and forums - as well as their marketing options. In addition, it offers the explanation of the viral marketing phenomenon.

The fifth chapter of this paper is dedicated to the marketing strategies of music festivals – their importance, the changes they require compared to the traditional marketing strategies and the concepts of reverse marketing and co-branding. It also explains the roles of event marketing managers.

The sixth chapter of this paper is dedicated to the empirical research and detailed analysis of the data obtained on the basis of randomly selected sample of EXIT festival visitors, using the written survey questionnaire.

At the end of the paper there are conclusions which are in accordance with the above mentioned hypotheses.

1. EVENTS

1.1. A brief historical overview of events

Various types of festivals and events have long existed as significant part of human society and were devised as forms of public display, civic ritual and collective celebration. In fact, according to Turner, cited in Quinn¹, people in all cultures recognized the need to set aside certain times and spaces for communal creativity and celebration. These practices date back centuries, even millennia. Considering the diverse nature of events, their formation is not linked to the same time period.

It is well known that the exhibitions and trade events were held in the ancient period. Ancient historians noted sport events as significant and prestigious form of social activities, which reached its peak with the organization of the ancient Olympic Games. Festival-type events are known to have existed since the Middle Ages when they were financed by the church, although some types of similar events date back to the Roman times. As much as it seems that the conference events are a product of modern life, their origins date back to the 18th century.

Events are likely to have originated even before the appearance of money, but the establishment and acceptance of the general equivalent was undoubtedly followed by their further development. The emergence of capitalism, new products and new social relations, as well as the new way of life paved the way for more versatile development of the growing number of events. However, it was during the 20th century when the development of all the different types of events peaked and they came close to what we nowadays consider events. It was because of the phenomenon of discretionary income, increase in purchasing power and standards of consumers, shifting the focus from fundamental to additional needs, and the birth of completely new consumers' needs which all increased the demand for a specific range of events, which then stimulated the development of various contemporary events. Development of events in the economic sense helped solve the problem of employment and had an impact on economic growth, especially in developed market economies. The best example for that is the impact of mega sport events such as the Olympic Games or World Championships of popular sports on the economic growth of host countries.

Historical research demonstrates how the events evolved from primitive gathering of people for agricultural or religious reasons to modern type of events, as well as their long history of attracting tourists and establishing host communities as tourist destinations.

¹ Quinn, B. (2009), *Festivals, events and tourism. Festivals, events and tourism, in Jamal, T. and Robinson, M. (eds) The SAGE Handbook of Tourism Studies*, Sage, London, p. 485

1.2. Definitions of events

There is no single universally accepted definition of event. Many authors have discussed the definition of events and the various terms used to describe them. However, there is only limited agreement on standardised terms, definitions or categories to use. The differences are manifested as a result of different approaches of authors to defining certain events. Most authors agree that the event in the economic sense is a part of service economy, and different approaches to defining the event are the consequences of the specific characteristics of the environment in which some of the authors work and create. In addition, the events are highly versatile; therefore the definition of the events can be flexible to suit different situations.

The Accepted Practices Exchange (APEX) Industry Glossary of terms² defines an event as, “An organized occasion such as a meeting, convention, exhibition, special event, gala dinner, etc. An event is often composed of several different yet related functions.”

Goldblatt³ focuses on special events as “a unique moment in time, celebrated with ceremony and ritual to satisfy specific needs.”

Getz⁴ notes that events are spatial–temporal phenomena and that each is unique because of interactions among the setting, people, and management systems, including design elements and the program. He highlights the fact that the biggest appeal of events is that they are never the same, and that the guest has “to be there” in order to enjoy the experience fully.

He suggests two definitions, from the perspective of the event organizer, as well as the guest’s:

1. A special event is a one-time or infrequently occurring event outside normal programmes or activities of the sponsoring or organizing body.
2. To the customer or guest, a special event is an opportunity for leisure, social or cultural experience outside the normal range of choices or beyond everyday experience.

² http://www.conventionindustry.org/Files/APEX/APEX_Event_Specifications_Guide.pdf, retrieved on April 3, 2013.

³ Goldblatt, J. (2005), *Special Events: Event Leadership for a New World*, 4th edition, John Wiley & Sons, Hoboken, p. 6

⁴ Getz, D. (2008), Event Tourism: Definition, Evolution, and Research, *Tourism Management*, 29 (3), p. 404

Bowdin et al., cited in Bowdin⁵, note that the term “event” has been used “to describe specific rituals, presentations, performances or celebrations that are consciously planned and created to mark special occasions and/or to achieve particular social, cultural or corporate goals and objectives.”

Jago and Shaw, cited in Bowdin⁶, suggest six features of special events. According to them, special events should:

1. Attract tourists or tourism development
2. Be of limited duration
3. Be one-off or infrequent occurrence
4. Raise the awareness, image, or profile of a region
5. Offer a social experience
6. Be out of the ordinary

Summarising the definition of a special event, they note it as: “A one-time or infrequently occurring event of limited duration that provides the consumer with a leisure and social opportunity beyond everyday experience. Such events, which attract or have the potential to attract tourists, are often held to raise the profile, image or awareness of a region.”

1.3. Classification of events

There are different criteria for classification of events. The basic one classifies events as planned and unplanned. Planned events are the subject of study of event management and they require setup, management, executives and certain length of time. Unplanned events are accidents, natural disasters and other similar, and they will not be taken into consideration in this paper.

If the events are classified according to their size and scope, it is possible to distinguish the following four types:

1. Mega events
2. Hallmark events
3. Major events
4. Local events

⁵ Bowdin, G. (2006), *Identifying and analysing existing research undertaken in the events industry: a literature review for People1st*, Leeds Metropolitan University, Leeds, p. 13

⁶ Ibidem, p. 14

Mega event is an event that has impacts on the overall economic activity of the host country, and is globally covered by media. In economic terms, mega event is strongly reflected in the tourism and economic infrastructure of the host country. These events are generally associated to sports events. They include the Olympic Games, the Paralympic Games, the FIFA World Cup, the IAAF World Championships and World Fairs, but it is difficult for many other events to fit into this category.

Getz⁷ defines them as: “Mega-events, by way of their size or significance, are those that yield extraordinarily high levels of tourism, media coverage, prestige, or economic impact for the host community, venue or organization.”

In his definition, Hall, cited in Allen et al.⁸, explains that mega events owe their name to their size in terms of attendance, target market, level of public financial involvement, political effects, extent of television coverage, construction of facilities, and impact on economic and social fabric of the host community.

Hallmark event is an event with the distinctive quality of the program. Hallmark events are so identified with the spirit and soul of a host community that they become synonymous with the name of the place, and gain widespread recognition and awareness. Hallmark events are of special importance and attractiveness both for participants and visitors, they attract great attention of the public, contribute to the image of destination and maintain and revitalize the tradition. Classic examples of hallmark events are Carnival in Rio, the Tour de France, the Oktoberfest in Munich and Wimbledon. These events are identified with the very essence of these places and their citizens, and bring huge tourist revenue as well as a strong sense of local pride and international recognition.

Tourism researcher Ritchie, cited in Quinn⁹, published the first general discussion of their impact and defined them as “major one time or recurring events of limited duration, developed primarily to enhance awareness, appeal and profitability of a tourist destination in the short term or long term. Such events rely for their success on uniqueness, status, or timely significance to create interest and attract attention.”

Getz¹⁰ emphasizes their role in image making, place marketing and destination branding of host communities: “The term ‘hallmark’ describes an event that possesses such significance, in terms of tradition, attractiveness, quality or publicity, that the event

⁷ Getz, D. (2005), *Event Management and Event Tourism*, 2nd edition, Cognizant Communications Corporation, New York, p.18

⁸ Allen, J. et al. (2011), *Festival & Special event management*, 5th edition, John Wiley & Sons, Brisbane, p. 13

⁹ Quinn, B., op. cit., p. 487

¹⁰ Getz, D. (2005), *Event Management and Event Tourism*, 2nd edition, Cognizant Communications Corporation, New York, pp. 16-17

provides the host venue, community, or destination with a competitive advantage. Over time the event and destination can become inextricably linked.”

Major event is a large-scale event, with strong public interest and media coverage. Major events attract large numbers of visitors, and help the organizers achieve good economic results. In practice of management of events, these events are often sports-oriented, with an international reputation, and defined structure of competition (example: Formula One Grand Prix).

Local event is an event that is targeted mainly for local audiences and staged primarily for their social, fun and entertainment value. These events often produce a range of benefits, including engendering pride in the community, strengthening a feeling of belonging and creating a sense of place. They can also help with exposing people to new ideas and experiences, encouraging participation in sports and arts activities, and encouraging tolerance and diversity.

Another common way of classifying events is by their form or content:

- Cultural celebrations
- Arts and Entertainment
- Business and Trade
- Sport competitions
- Recreational
- Educational and Scientific
- Political and state
- Private events

Figure 1 provides a classification of planned events based primarily on their form—that is, obvious differences in their purpose and program. Some are for public celebration, while others are planned for purposes of competition, fun, entertainment, business or socializing.

One more criterion of classifying the events that is often mentioned in literature is according to the level they are attached to particular destination. Therefore, there are events that always take place in the same community, those that always take place in a different community, and those that take place simultaneously in several communities, or they cover the entire region.

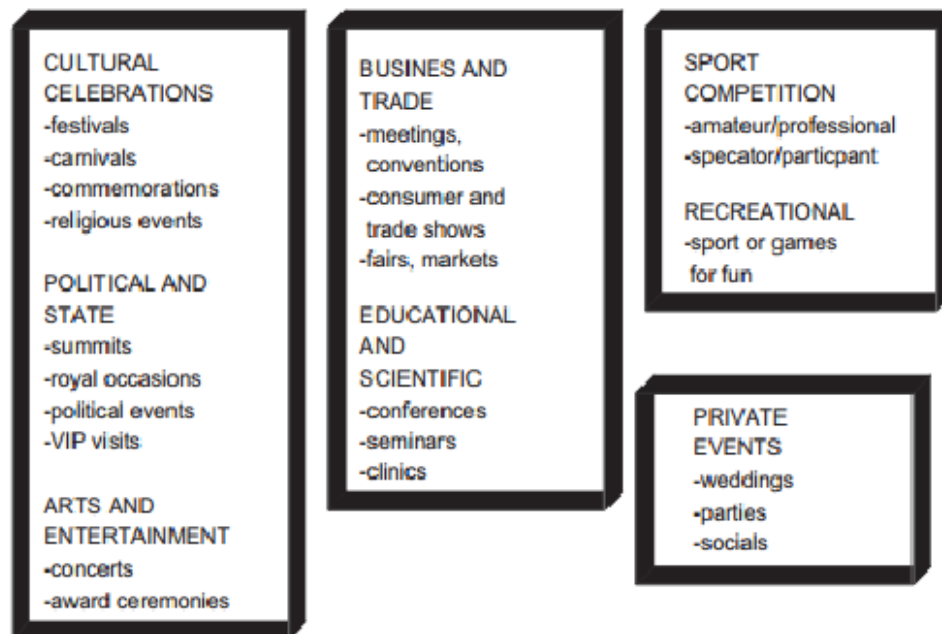


Figure 1: Classification of events based on their form (Source: Getz, 2008¹¹).

As Getz¹² explains, mega events, which by definition always take place in different community, are typically global in their orientation and require a competitive bid to “win” them as a one-time event for a particular place. On the other hand, hallmark events cannot exist independently of their host community, as well as regional and local events which are rooted in one place.

Finally, all events can be categorized as profitable and non-profit events. Non-profit events are characterized by special programmes mainly devised to enhance the image of the organizers, participants or some organizations. Another type of non-profit events is charity events, devised to collect funds, not for the organizers or participants, but for charity purposes.

Nevertheless, the majority of events are profitable. Their economic goal is the profit, and social objectives are related to implementation of various types of programmes - sports, cultural, artistic, business, educational, political or scientific.

¹¹ Getz, D. (2008), Event Tourism: Definition, Evolution, and Research, *Tourism Management*, 29 (3), p. 404

¹² Ibidem, p. 408

1.4. Tourist value of events

Events can be categorized according to their attractiveness for tourism. Even though the majority of events are tourist driven, there are a significant number of those with little or no thought given to their tourism appeal or potential. Getz¹³ explains that this is either due to the organizers' specific aims, or there is simply no relationship established between specific events and tourism. According to events' attractiveness for tourism, they can be classified in three following categories:

1. Festivals and events that are organized primarily for local residents and often with the help of volunteers. Although in the majority of the cases these events are small and have limited or none tourist attractiveness, they can still function as a valuable opportunity for visitors to the area. However, most of the local events do not have the need to be tourism oriented; their organizers even feel threatened by it and take pride in their events not being commercialized. That comes as no surprise considering the fact that they are community and culturally oriented, and massive tourism would have potential negative impacts and probably corrupt their authenticity.
2. Events of regional and provincial significance which can have a significant tourist attractiveness power. These events are rarely aimed to become larger. However, with the help of tourists attracted to the event and future investments, their tourist potential can be developed. Usually the events in this group have a professional staff.
3. Events of national and international significance which are most attractive from the tourist point of view. These events attract national and international tourists, and can further enhance the reputation and attractiveness of certain destination. Unlike local events, their primary goal is to increase the tourism appeal of the host destination as much as possible.

1.5. The portfolio approach

Every year a large number of different types of events that attract tourists take place in many destinations and also, a great number of new events are planned annually. More and more destinations are trying to figure out the potential of events in implementation of various economic and tourist objectives, and in order to achieve that, they need the portfolio approach. The portfolio approach is similar to how a company strategically evaluates and develops its line of products and services. It is goal-driven and value-based.

¹³ Getz, D. (2008), Event Tourism: Definition, Evolution, and Research, *Tourism Management*, 29 (3), p. 408

Destinations must decide what they want from events, that is, what the desired benefits are and how they will measure their value.¹⁴

The basic idea behind the portfolio approach is that destinations and tourist organizations should use more strategic thinking in relation to the events and their management from the perspective of tourism. The content of the portfolio, or the kind of event that the destination has or is planning, as well as event's tourist value and demand, should be the result of strategic planning, and not random and unrelated decisions. Getz, cited in Pivac¹⁵, defines a portfolio approach as a series of events that a destination has to offer, each with their own values, costs, market share and profitability. Each type of event should help meet the different goals of development of event tourism. According to him, all the destinations should develop their portfolio approach according to type, season and attractiveness for the tourist market, and in that way they will achieve specific tourist values. He also emphasizes that the main role of the portfolio approach is to attract new tourists.

According to Getz, all the events in one destination can be grouped according to two criteria: the demand, which is measured by number of tourists attracted, and the value which is measured in meeting other touristic purposes, such as media attention, image enhancement, development and sustainability. Getz has developed a model to describe the portfolio of events that illustrates how different events have different travel demand and value.

The portfolio approach and the model mentioned are designed based on one basic principle. Almost all events have tourist and local value, but only some of them are able to generate enormous tourist demand. Therefore, the hierarchy of events will be present within any destination, with most of the events that have little or no direct tourist attraction, regardless of the type of event. Accordingly, local and regional events which are at the lower part of the model cannot be of major importance for the destination image, while hallmark and mega events, which are at the higher part, can attract a lot of tourists and have large and long-term impact on the image and attractiveness of the destination.

¹⁴ Getz, D. (2008), Event Tourism: Definition, Evolution, and Research, *Tourism Management*, 29 (3), p. 407

¹⁵ Pivac, T. and Stamenković, I. (2011), *Menadžment događaja*, Prirodno-matematički fakultet u Novom Sadu, Novi Sad, pp. 58-59

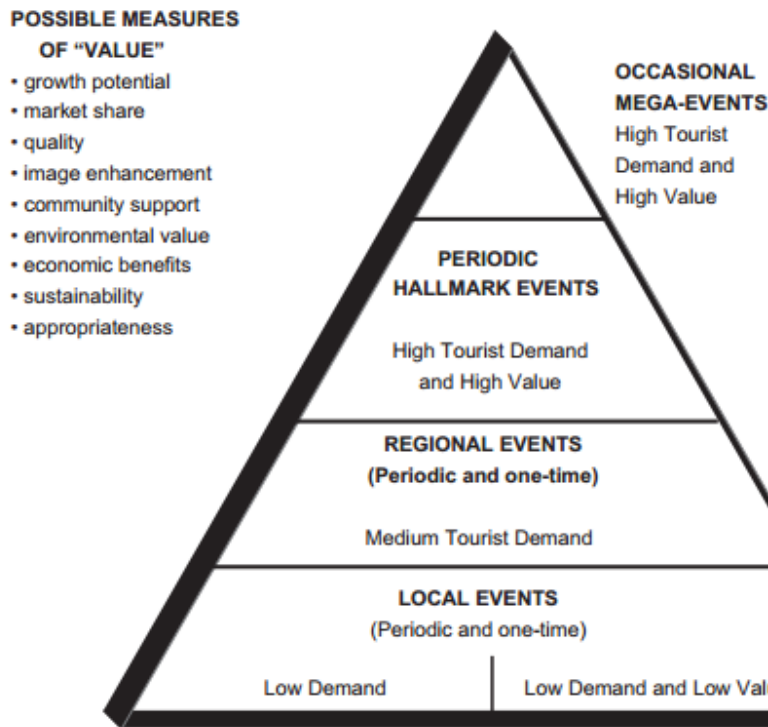


Figure 2: The portfolio approach (Source: Getz, 2008¹⁶)

At the bottom of the triangle (Figure 2) there are local events with low demand and low value. These events are usually small and organized periodically or only once. The second group of events in the model are regional events with medium tourist demand and medium value. As well as local events, regional events can be periodic or one-time. The third group of events are periodic hallmark events with high tourist demand and high value. At the top of the triangle are periodic mega events with high value and high tourist demand. The model also explains what the possible measures of value are: growth potential, market share, quality, image enhancement, community support, environmental value, economic benefits, sustainability and appropriateness.

According to Getz, the model portfolio approach can be used as a tool for planning and evaluation. With the help of the model, destinations and tourism organizations can assess their current tourist offer of events and their tourist value. The portfolio model also helps destinations and tourism organizations in planning how to build or improve their portfolio of events in order to maximize the tourist value.

¹⁶ Getz, D. (2008), Event Tourism: Definition, Evolution, and Research, *Tourism Management*, 29 (3), p. 404

1.6. Event tourism

As it was already mentioned and explained, events are important motivators of tourism, and they greatly influence the development of a destination. Their roles and impacts within tourism have been well documented in tourism related literature. Yet it was only a few decades ago that “event tourism” became established as an independent discipline in both the tourism industry and in the research community.

The study of events has existed long before that, but only as a part of other disciplines such as anthropology or geography. Event studies were considered an unnecessary and perhaps irrelevant idea until the academics doing event-related research published great number of papers and books on the subject of events, as well as established journals and conferences that are specialized in events. By doing so, they generated sufficient interest in that field. As a result, “event management” developed as a fast growing professional field in which tourists constitute a potential market for planned events.

Getz¹⁷ defines event tourism as a set of interrelations between tourism management and event management. Tourism management deals with tourism development based on analyzing the behaviour and motivation of all kinds of tourists. On the other hand, event management deals with event marketing, design and managing of an event. Moreover, it tries to understand the event experiences and to manage them. Hence, event tourism is in the middle of the two sectors. In other words, event tourism aims at full exploitation of the capabilities of events in order to achieve tourism development of host communities.

As Getz explains, event tourism is generally accepted term that includes all planned events in an integrated approach to development and marketing of destinations. As with all forms of special-interest travel, event tourism must be viewed from both demand and supply sides. The demand side consists of determining the value of events in promoting a positive destination image, the position of event marketing within the general marketing of the destination, and potential of co-branding with destinations. On the supply side, destinations develop and promote events of all kinds to meet multiple goals:

- to attract more tourists (especially in the off-peak seasons)
- to serve as a catalyst for urban renewal, and for increasing the infrastructure and tourism capacity of the destination
- to foster a positive destination image
- to contribute to general place marketing
- to animate specific attractions or areas

¹⁷ Getz, D. (2008), Event Tourism: Definition, Evolution, and Research, *Tourism Management*, 29 (3), p. 406

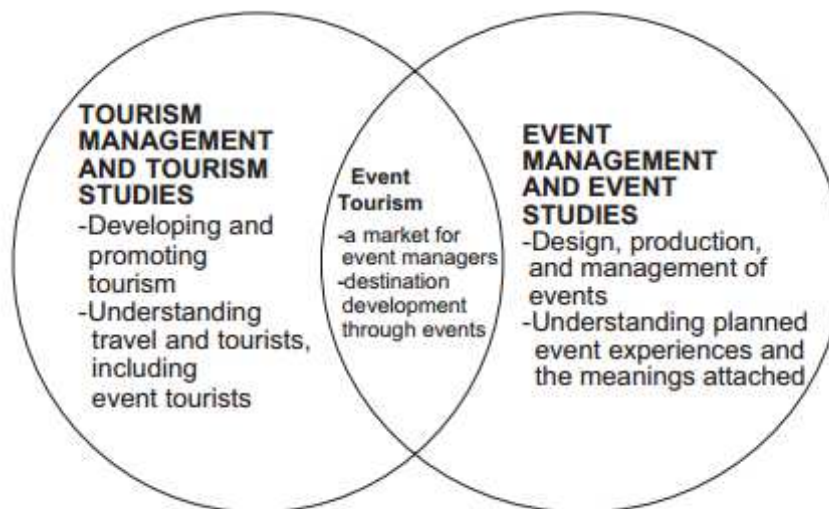


Figure 3: Event tourism (Source: Getz, 2008¹⁸)

Event tourism and other event-related research are still insufficiently developed. Events are primarily driven by the goal of economic benefits. In fact, so much research has been devoted to this, that other outcomes such as social, cultural and personal development have been neglected. According to Getz¹⁹, event tourism should identify inputs - what it takes to make events happen, including the costs of bidding, facility development and marketing, transforming processes - events as agents of change, and outcomes - desired and undesired impacts of events. Depending on one's perspective, outcomes and transforming processes might be interpreted as a positive or negative impact.

1.7. Outcomes and impacts of events

Roche, cited in Getz²⁰, described events as “important elements in the orientation of national societies to international or global society.” Indeed, many countries have used events in order to gain legitimacy and reputation, highlight their achievements, support trade and tourism, or assist in the process of opening their countries to global influences.

Tourists can have a positive image of the destination, but it is only one of the many choices, so the question “why do they need to visit that destination at that specific

¹⁸ Getz, D. (2008), Event Tourism: Definition, Evolution, and Research, *Tourism Management*, 29 (3), p. 406

¹⁹ Ibidem, p. 419

²⁰ Ibidem, p. 414

moment?” can arise. It is the event that can be the “engine” that creates the real reason for that potential tourist to visit a particular destination.

When tourists visit a destination for the purpose of attending an event, they tend to stay before and after the event as well. That enables the sale of other products the destination has to offer. Events increase the level of local businesses, fill hotel capacities, and in long term perspective, they enhance the infrastructure, quality of life of the local population and add additional value to the identity of destination. In addition, many destinations have a seasonal problem, which means that tourist flows are concentrated in a relatively short period of the year. Events can play an important role in overcoming these problems and attract tourists during the off-season periods as well.

Events can have a significant effect on the formation of destination image and can help with promoting, positioning and branding it, which can contribute to a more favourable perception as a potential tourist destination. For many destinations, events can provide a wide public attention through extensive media coverage. Socio-cultural benefits of events on local community, such as increased activity associated with the event and the strengthening of regional values and traditions are also significant.

However, in the process of searching for specific events it is very important that they match a desired image of the destination. For example, does the destination want to establish the image of modern European city, or wants to preserve the image of a traditional town. It is of extreme importance to carefully select the events for the destination, because each event can always have both positive and negative effects on destination image. A major event may jeopardize the image of the destination, as tourists will be more involved in the event than the destination itself, which will not have a long term effect, while a major event cannot attract sufficient attention of tourists if the destination is unknown.

By perceiving all the outcomes of events, it is obvious that they can offer a variety of economic and social benefits for the destination. Therefore, destination managers should use events as an effective “tool” for the development of tourism in the destination and adopt a long-term, strategic approach to event tourism in the field of planning and development, in order to realize the full potential of the destination.

1.8. Strategic planning in event tourism

Every destination that wants to become an attractive tourist destination should have a strategy that seeks to optimize the potential benefits of event tourism. In addition, constant monitoring is necessary, as well as adaptation of tourism strategies to any changes, with innovation - including various events, playing a key role, especially in relation to the quality of the tourism product.

According to Getz, cited in Pivac²¹, strategic planning in the case of tourism involves many different steps. The first task for the planner of tourism development of a destination who wants to promote destination and event at the same time is to formulate a vision of event tourism in order to determine the direction of the strategy. Tourism organizations responsible for the development of a tourism strategy in a destination should establish overall objectives of event tourism which should deal with several different issues.

The objectives of event tourism should include, for example, decisions about the extent to which current events have been developed and promoted as a tourist attraction, and to what extent will the creation and development of new events and event offers be supported. In addition, the role the events play in the creation and strengthening of the destination image should be taken into consideration.

After formulating the vision and goals of the event tourism, the planners should undertake the assessment of the resources and potential tourism products. Resources represent the potential the destination has, and their analysis includes the assessment of human, financial, physical, political and technological factors that may be used in the development and marketing of destination. Besides resources and potential tourism products assessment, the destination should also implement the SWOT analysis, which consists of analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in relation to event tourism.

The resources, potential products and SWOT analysis should help the destination identify what can provide maximum effectiveness of events. Every destination has its limitations concerning the kind of event it can host, depending on the availability of accommodation and preferences of the tourists. Even if the destination wants to host certain event, it should be considered whether the event corresponds to the possibilities of the destination, its strengths, weaknesses and needs.

Getz²², cited in Pivac, defined several tourism strategies. First, events can be used as the main attraction around which destinations can develop a theme and create image. This kind of strategy is suitable for small or large cities and for rural areas which lack basic tourism infrastructure. In this strategy, it is desirable that the destination has one or more hallmark events, so that the event and destinations become inseparable and mutually supportive. It can also be only one event – a mega event, which is suitable for all the destinations striving to high tourism growth. However, using mega event as a strategy is

²¹ Pivac, T. and Stamenković, I., op. cit., pp. 53-54

²² Ibidem, p. 57

extremely expensive and hard to achieve, considering the fact that mega events require bidding.

There is also the generic tourism strategy which includes several different events in one community. Instead of attracting big events or creating new ones, this strategy is based on already existing events, and their strengthening. It also contributes to authenticity, diversity and stronger support of community in attracting and satisfying the tourists.

Whichever the chosen strategy is, it must be carefully selected and thoroughly thought of. Inappropriate event tourism strategy can lead to numerous negative outcomes, especially regarding the economic aspect. However, even the appropriate strategy can fail if it is applied without the proper support of other factors. One of the most important ones is marketing.

2. INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

2.1. The concept of marketing communication

Communication is an integral part of everyday life. We constantly communicate, send messages and interpret those we receive. However, it is in modern business where communication obtains a special significance. In the market transaction every individual or company inevitably plays the role of someone who is sending information about itself and its product and services.

Philip Kotler, considered world's leading expert in marketing, defines marketing as "the analysis, planning, implementation, and control quality of carefully formulated programs designed to bring voluntary exchanges of values with target markets for the purpose of achieving organizational objectives. It relies heavily on designing the organization's offering in terms of the target markets' needs and desires, and on using effective pricing, communication, and distribution to inform, motivate, and service the markets."²³

According to The American Marketing Association, marketing is "the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large"²⁴. In other words, its purpose is not only to advertise and sell a product, but to satisfy the needs of customers and simultaneously make profit.

Marketing communications are the means by which companies are trying to inform, persuade and remind consumers, directly or indirectly, of the products and brands they sell. In a way, marketing communications represent the voice of the brand and are the means of establishing a dialogue and building relationships with consumers. Therefore, there are two basic participants in the marketing communication:

- The marketers, or people who send a certain message and expect a response from the other party in the process of communication
- The potential buyers who receive the marketers' message and respond to it

²³ Kotler, P. (1982), *Marketing for nonprofit organizations*, 2nd edition, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, p.6

²⁴ <http://www.marketingpower.com/aboutama/documents/american%20marketing%20association%20releases%20new%20definition%20for%20marketing.pdf>, retrieved on April 22, 2013.

The objectives of each marketing communication are:

- To increase sales by informing potential and current customers about products, services and conditions of sale.
- To convince the consumer to choose certain product, buy in certain locations or visit certain event.
- To encourage the consumers to take action and direct their behaviour towards the supply of a particular organization.

Since the middle of the 20th century, when marketing started becoming one of the dominant business concepts, marketing theory has developed intensively. Marketing theory and practice during the nineteen-nineties was characterized by the appearance of a new concept of integrated marketing communications (IMC). It is the concept of developing long-term relationships with consumers, which is based on the management of two-way communication system between the company and its clients.

2.2. Integrated marketing communications

Integrated marketing communications were introduced in business because of the fact that modern marketing requires more than just development of a good product, formation of a reasonable price and availability of the product. The consumers must be informed of existence of that product and its advantages comparing to other similar products, as well as persuaded to try it. Companies need to communicate with potential and existing stakeholders and the public. For most companies the question is not whether to communicate but rather what to actually say, how to say it, to whom and how often. Every day, communication is becoming more and more difficult as the increasing number of companies is struggling to attract more consumers.

Before the appearance of the concept of IMC, communication in marketing was a part of the promotional activities of the company. Promotion is one of the four basic marketing mix instruments whose communicative role is the most visible. Nowadays, the term promotion is replaced by a new concept of marketing communication where the emphasis is placed on creating relationships between the company and its target groups. That way, promotion, as a persuasive communication based on a one-way transmission of messages from the company to its customers, gave way to new forms of two-way exchange of information that are now known under the concept of integrated marketing communications. Integrated marketing communications create two-way communication with customers because they do not only address to customers, but also talk to them and

establish a dialog which allows them to recognize and meet the needs of customers more effectively.

The American Association of Advertising Agencies defines IMC as “a concept of marketing communications planning that recognizes the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of a variety of communication disciplines - for example, general advertising, direct response, sales promotion, and public relations - and combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency, and maximum communications impact.”²⁵

Writer	Date	Definition
American Association of Advertising Agencies	1989	A concept of marketing communications planning that recognises the added value in a programme that integrates a variety of strategic disciplines – e.g. general advertising, direct response, sales promotion and public relations – and combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency and maximum communication impact.
Schultz	1991	The process of managing all sources of information about a product/service to which a customer or prospect is exposed, which behaviourally moves the customer towards a sale and maintains customer loyalty.
Keegan <i>et al.</i>	1992	The strategic coordination of all messages and media used by an organisation to collectively influence its perceived brand value.
Kotler <i>et al.</i>	1999	IMC is the concept under which a company carefully integrates and coordinates its many communications channels to deliver a clear, consistent and compelling message about the organisation and its products.
Duncan	2002	A cross-functional process for creating and nourishing profitable relationships with customers and other stakeholders by strategically controlling or influencing all messages sent to these groups and encouraging data-driven purposeful dialogue with them.
Schultz & Schultz	2004	IMC is a strategic business process used to plan, develop, execute and evaluate coordinated, measurable, persuasive brand communication programmes over time with consumers, customers, prospects, and other targeted, relevant external and internal audiences.
Kliatchko	2005	IMC is the concept and process of strategically managing audience-focused, channel-centred and results-driven brand communication programmes over time.

Table 1: Definitions of IMC (Source: Kerr *et al.*²⁶)

²⁵ <http://www.studiodino.com/info/news54.htm>, retrieved on April 24, 2013.

²⁶ Kerr *et al.* (2008), An inside-out approach to integrated marketing communication, *International Journal of Advertising*, 27 (4), p. 511

However, the integrated marketing communications concept was defined in many ways and by many people, with no clear agreement on universally accepted definition. Therefore, Table 1 presents a number of the most commonly used definitions.

Integrated marketing communications can produce greater consistency of message and influence the increase in sales. They encourage management to think about all the ways in which the customer comes into contact with a company, ways of presenting the company and the relative importance of each communication tool. They should enhance the company's ability to reach the right customers with the right message at the right time and in the right place²⁷. It is of extreme importance to synchronize the messages passed by the promotional elements of the integrated marketing communications mix to the potential customers. "IMC is performed in a manner of synergy, rather than in isolation."²⁸

2.3. The promotional mix

Promotion has been defined as the coordination of all seller initiated efforts to set up channels of information and persuasion in order to sell goods and services or promote an idea.²⁹ While implicit communication occurs through the various elements of the marketing mix, most of an organization's communications with the marketplace take place as part of a carefully planned and controlled promotional program. The basic tools used to accomplish an organization's communication objectives are often referred to as the promotional mix.

For a long time companies' communication with consumers was based on the promotional mix as a strategic combination of four basic types of promotion: advertising, personal selling, sales promotion and publicity, where advertising played the dominant role. The appearance of new computer technologies has led to new forms of communication such as direct marketing and internet marketing. With the concept of integrated marketing communications, the promotional mix is extended by including new forms of promotion and integration of all its instruments. It is characterized by a shift from mass media to accurately defined target groups that are addressed to. Integrated marketing communications begin with the consumer and not the product, and they try to build one on one communication with the consumer, considering the fact that every customer is unique and will respond best to a personalized communication.

²⁷ Kotler, P. (2002), *Marketing management, Millenium edition*, Pearson Custom Publishing, Boston, p.281

²⁸ Naeem, B. et al. (2013), Integrated Marketing Communication: A review paper, *Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business*, 5 (5), p. 124

²⁹ Belch, G. and Belch, M. (2003), *Advertising and promotion*, 6th edition, McGraw-Hill, New York, gl. 11

Every company has a variety of ways to communicate. Depending on the cost, the ability to pass the message to the chosen target segment and other factors, the company chooses a combination that fits the goals and strategies of communication.



Figure 4: Integrated marketing communications (Source: Author)

There is no one promotional mix that would fit all the organizations. Some of them use mostly advertising, others personal selling, while some use more or less balanced promotional mix. No matter what combination of promotional activities is used, all forms of promotion must be coordinated to ensure maximum synergy. Raman and Naik, cited in Naeem³⁰, defined the IMC in the following words “An IMC programme plans and executes various marketing activities with consistency so that its total impact exceeds the sum of each activity”. Each element of the promotional mix plays a distinctive role within the IMC programme - they may take on a variety of forms, and each of them has certain advantages and disadvantages.

³⁰ Naeem, B. et al., op. cit., p. 125

2.3.1. Advertising

Advertising is a way of mass communication with customers. It enables the customer to quickly find the product he is looking for, to be informed of the existence of a new product, or to obtain any other information necessary to make decision about purchasing certain product.

The company finances transmission of certain message about itself or its products, therefore advertising is defined as any paid form of nonpersonal communication about an organization, product, service, or idea by an identified sponsor³¹. The term “nonpersonal” means that advertising involves mass media that can transmit a message to large groups of potential consumers at the same time. Different forms of advertising include:

- TV commercials
- Radio ads
- Billboards and outdoor advertising assets
- Advertising in magazines
- Advertising in newspapers
- Websites and banners

One of the most important disadvantages of advertising is the fact that there is no opportunity for a feedback from the message recipient. Therefore, before the message is sent, the advertiser must consider how the audience will interpret and respond to it.

The nature and purpose of advertising differ from one industry to another and across situations. The goals of advertising may be: the propagation of a new product or a new event, changing consumer preferences, the acquisition of new customers, neutralizing the effects of the propaganda efforts of company's competitors, reducing seasonality of sales, product expansion purposes, reminder and reassurance of customers that they have chosen the right product, etc. The expected response may also differ - one advertiser may seek to generate immediate action from the customer, while another may want to develop awareness or a positive image for its product or service over a longer period. However, the main long-term goal of advertising is to facilitate, accelerate and increase the sale of the company.

In order for the advertising to effectively perform its role as a form of promotion, certain conditions must be fulfilled - the product needs to be suitable for wide market, it needs to be differentiated in comparison to competitive products and emotional motives for sale must prevail over the rational ones.

³¹ Belch, G. and Belch, M., op. cit., p. 6

Advertising is the best-known and most widely expanded form of promotion. It is also a very important promotional tool, particularly for companies whose products and services are targeted at mass consumer markets. In addition, advertising can be used to create brand images and symbolic appeals for a company or brand. The total effect of advertising depends on the degree of its integration in integrated marketing communications and overall marketing efforts of the company.

2.3.2. Direct marketing

Direct marketing is a system of marketing by which an organization communicates directly with customers to generate a response and/or transaction.³² It involves efforts to gain and retain customers by being in contact with them directly, without the use of intermediaries. Traditionally, direct marketing has not been considered an element of the promotional mix. However, because it has become such an integral part of the IMC program of many organizations and often involves separate objectives, budgets and strategies, we now have direct marketing as a component of the promotional mix.

The objectives of direct marketing campaign can be the same as for other types of promotion: to improve sales and profits, to acquire or retain customers, to build consumer awareness about products or services or to build the image of the company. More and more companies use direct marketing to develop permanent and direct relationships with customers. Direct marketing activity can be a means by which marketers achieve that current customers continue being satisfied and spend money buying the products of the same company.

To successfully implement direct marketing programmes, companies must make a number of decisions. As in other marketing programs, they must determine:

- What the programme's objectives will be
- Which markets to target (through the use of a list or marketing database)
- What direct-marketing strategies will be employed
- How to evaluate the effectiveness of the program

Direct marketing covers a wide range of methods including:

- **Direct mail** – It involves sending offers, notifications, reminders, etc. to potential consumers. Direct mail is popular because it can be personalized, there is no direct competition like in other media, its effects are easy to control and it provides a wide range of ways to reach the consumer. However, there are some

³² Belch, G. and Belch, M., op. cit., p. 18

limiting factors such as the high cost per contact, the time required to establish contact and the increasing use of electronic mail.

- **Telemarketing** – It involves the use of telephone call centers in order to attract potential customers, increase sales to existing customers and to provide other services such as taking orders and answering questions. Telemarketing helps companies increase revenue, reduce sales costs and increase customer satisfaction. Companies use two different types of call centers, inbound telemarketing which receives calls from the customers, and output telemarketing where the company calls existing and potential customers.
- **Catalogue marketing** – It involves selling the products via catalogues that are distributed to consumers usually by mail. It enables consumers to order products without leaving their homes.
- **Direct response advertising** – Products are promoted through advertising which encourages the consumer to purchase directly from the manufacturer. Although it appears in the mainstream media such as television, newspapers and magazines, it differs from the standard propaganda in that it is designed to search for a direct response, such as an order or an inquiry. The products of a company are advertised, and the consumers order them by mail, on the Internet or by calling a number provided to them for that purpose.

Direct marketing campaigns, as well as all promotional campaigns, should be fully integrated with all elements of the marketing mix to provide a coherent marketing strategy. Direct marketers need to understand how the product is positioned in the market, since it is essential that the messages sent as a part of a campaign of direct marketing are consistent with the messages that are sent by other parts of company's marketing strategy.

2.3.3. Publicity

Publicity refers to nonpersonal communications regarding an organization, product, service, or idea not directly paid for or run under identified sponsorship³³. It usually comes in the form of a news story, editorial or announcement about an organization and its products and services. Like advertising, publicity involves nonpersonal communication to the mass audience, but unlike advertising, publicity is not directly paid for by the company.

³³ Belch, G. and Belch, M., op. cit., p. 22

The company or organization attempts to get the media to cover or run a favorable story on a product, service, or event to affect awareness, knowledge, opinions, and behaviour. Techniques used to gain publicity include news releases, press conferences, feature articles, photographs, films and video clips.

The most important advantage of publicity over other forms of promotion is its credibility. Consumers generally tend to be less sceptical toward favourable information about a product or service when it comes from a source they perceive as unbiased. Another advantage of publicity is its low cost, since the company is not paying for time or space in a mass medium such as TV, radio or newspapers. While an organization may incur some costs in developing publicity items or maintaining a staff to do so, these expenses are far less than those for the other promotional programs. The disadvantage of publicity is that it is not always under the control of an organization and is sometimes unfavourable. Negative stories about a company or its products can be very damaging.

2.3.4. Public Relations

It is important to recognize the distinction between publicity and public relations. When an organization systematically plans and distributes information in an attempt to control and manage its image and the nature of the publicity it receives, it is really engaging in a function known as public relations. Public relations are defined as “the management function which evaluates public attitudes, identifies the policies and procedures of an individual or organization with the public interest, and executes a program of action to earn public understanding and acceptance.”³⁴

Public relations can be used to launch new products of a company; for the purpose of repositioning an old product - products that have poor rating need campaigning; to defend products facing problems in public - experts in the field of public relations must be skilled in crisis management; and to build and reinforce the image that will positively represent the company's products.

Public relations generally have a broader objective than publicity, as its purpose is to establish and maintain a positive image of the company among its various publics. Public relations use publicity and a variety of other tools such as special publications, participation in community activities, fund-raising, sponsorship of special events and various other activities to enhance a company's image. Traditionally, publicity and public relations have been considered more supportive than primary marketing and promotional processes. However, their role has changed and many firms have begun making PR and publicity an integral part of their marketing strategies.

³⁴ Belch, G. and Belch, M., op. cit., p. 23

2.3.5. Sales promotion

Sales promotion is a special tool of marketing communication which transmits an appropriate message to the target market and combines the personal and impersonal communication channels. The specific feature of sales promotion and its main difference from other forms of marketing communication is that some additional benefits are offered to the buyers to encourage them to purchase.

Sales promotion activities are numerous and are classified in two categories: consumer-oriented and trade-oriented activities.

Consumer-oriented sales promotion is targeted to the ultimate user of a product or service and includes couponing, sampling, premiums, rebates, contests, sweepstakes and various point-of-purchase materials. These promotional tools encourage consumers to make an immediate purchase and that way they can stimulate short-term sales.

Trade-oriented sales promotion is targeted toward marketing intermediaries such as wholesalers, distributors and retailers. Promotional and merchandising allowances, price deals, sales contests and trade shows are some of the promotional tools used to encourage the trade to stock and promote a company's products.

In recent years many companies have shifted the emphasis of their promotional strategy from advertising to sales promotion. Reasons for the increased emphasis on sales promotion include declining brand loyalty and increased consumer sensitivity to promotional deals. Another major reason is that retailers have become larger and more powerful and are demanding more trade promotion support from companies.³⁵

2.3.6. Personal selling

Personal selling is a form of person-to-person communication in which a seller attempts to assist and/or persuade prospective buyers to purchase the company's product or service or to act on an idea. Unlike advertising, personal selling involves direct contact between the buyer and the seller, either face-to-face or through some form of telecommunications such as telephone sales.³⁶

Like all the other forms of marketing communications, personal selling has its advantages and disadvantages. The advantages of personal selling are:

³⁵ Belch, G. and Belch, M., op. cit., p. 22

³⁶ Ibidem, p. 23

- It provides rapid feedback and flexibility. Personal selling is a two-way form of communication - while the personal seller informs the customer of the offered product or service, he also receives the feedback on how the message was received. The seller is able to meet the needs and preferable means of communication of the potential consumers and tailor his presentation according to them, which is why personal selling is a very flexible form of communication.
- It provides the ability to communicate a large number of complex information. The seller is able to attract and retain the customer's attention because his message does not interfere with other messages from the environment.
- The number of lost messages is reduced. Personal selling is focused on a small number of customers who are thought to be interested in the product or service of the company. That way, personal selling enables creation of long-term relationship with customers, as well as building a partnership between the seller and the buyer.

The disadvantages of personal selling include the high cost and the inconsistency of the message due to the fact that the sellers consider themselves independent from the rest of the company and adjust their messages in order to initiate the sales and attract more customers. That way, the messages about the company passed by different sellers may differ from each other.

Personal selling affects the customers to buy the product or service and establish a long-term relationship with the company. In addition to all the specific features of personal selling which make it different from other forms of marketing communication, it is an inseparable part of IMC of a company, and as such is almost never used alone in the performance of the company in the market. Combining it with other forms of promotion achieves greater efficiency and effectiveness of personal selling.

As it was mentioned earlier in this chapter, the integrated marketing communications concept appeared in the nineteen-nineties. At the beginning, the integrated marketing communications mix was formed of only four basic types of marketing communications: advertising, personal selling, sales promotion and publicity. However, the IMC mix was extended every time there was a need for a new type of marketing communication.

First, that was direct marketing as the way to increase the sales. Even though the four primary parts of the IMC mix did considerably good job in generating sales, they all had some drawbacks. The introduction of direct marketing was the way to combine the best of the other marketing communications and overcome their shortcomings. As a result,

direct marketing is cheaper and reaches a larger number of potential customers than the personal selling does, and yet it is more targeted than the advertising.

Then came another addition – public relations. The appearance of PR was quite expected considering the fact that the publicity was too fragile and too risky to be left unauthorized and therefore it needed professional and well organized coordination which public relations can provide.

The rise of the internet technology led to development of the newest addition to the integrated marketing communications mix – the internet marketing communication. However, the majority of the marketing related literature is still indecisive whether to consider it an equal part of the integrated marketing communications mix or just a part of the other marketing communications. Nevertheless, its importance has been increasing rapidly recently and it looks like it is just the beginning. Internet marketing communication is the case study of the paper and will therefore be thoroughly described in the next two chapters.

3. INTERNET MARKETING COMMUNICATION

Internet marketing – often called online marketing or eMarketing – is essentially any marketing activity that is conducted online through the use of internet technologies. Internet marketing is much more than just advertising that is shown on websites, it also includes other kinds of online activities like email and social networking.

Traditional marketing mix, especially traditional advertising as its most important and most profitable part, relied on one of the traditional media channels – newspapers, television, radio, magazine or billboard. Basically, the aim of any marketing activity has always been the same - to exploit the reach of mass media by broadcasting a single message to a mass market, while the advertiser has been able to control the placement, frequency and content of the message as well as the distribution channel.

3.1. The rise of internet marketing communication

The growing popularity of the internet has changed the way people gather news, communicate, buy and make decisions and it all caused the reinvention of the traditional marketing strategies. Blogs, wikis, social networks and news websites are just a few examples of how the world of information is becoming more of a social experience. All the content available online is fast moving: within minutes, blogs, tweets and Facebook profiles are updated with the latest news, gadgets and gossip.

With the arrival of the internet, marketers have a new medium to spread the word on, through an “integrated communication approach” that achieves increased brand awareness and market reach. The increasing mass use of computers has provided a new channel for marketers to communicate with consumers, causing media habits to shift from exclusively offline channels to an integrated approach of mixing media.³⁷ With further development in online marketing, the strategies and tools are evolving rapidly as well, shifting from impersonal mass messages to more personal and targeted communication with the audiences.

Internet marketing communication has many attributes which are different than other media's and some of the most important ones are:

³⁷ Trengove, J. A. et al. (2011), *Internet Marketing: A highly practical guide to every aspect of internet marketing*, online edition, GetSmarter under the Creative Commons, p. 96, available at <https://vula.uct.ac.za/access/content/group/95dfae58-9991-4317-8a1d-e2d58f80b3a3/Published%20OER%20UCT%20Resources/Internet%20Marketing%20textbook.pdf>, retrieved on December 15, 2013

- Immediacy - the internet changes at an extremely quick pace and online audiences expect instant updates and information. To keep the interest and attention of the vast audience the Internet provides, internet marketers must respond to online messages and interact with communities as quickly as possible.
- Personalisation - customers online are no longer faceless members of a broad target audience, they are individuals who want to be addressed personally³⁸. At the same time, no other media offers marketers such an easy access to the wealth of consumers' personal information. Therefore, with the correct use of the information available online, marketers can benefit by targeting the relevant people precisely and personally.
- Relevance - communication online must be interesting and relevant to the reader, otherwise it will simply be ignored. With all the information that is competing for the targeted audience's attention, every marketer must find a way to stand out and engage the potential customers. The best way to do this is by giving them exactly what they want, when they want it.

Internet marketing communication is the fastest growing and most exciting branch of marketing today. As the world becomes more and more connected, keeping up with developments and trends is essential for marketers trying to reach new audiences who are more demanding, perceptive and fragmented than ever. Technology and software are changing at such a high rate that it seems almost impossible to keep up with trends. All the events interested not only in continuing their current success but in attracting new audiences as well are evolving and adapting to the online sphere.

Many traditional media have been forced to make their services available online as well, so-called "going digital", in order to endure this rather sudden and radical change of creation, publishing, distribution and consumption of new media. The "digital revolution" has changed the shape of media for good and the old media is slowly coming to terms with the fact that the digital age is not going anywhere. Moreover, it has continued developing faster and further beyond every expectation. The web is constantly shifting, growing and changing, and the only way of continuing enjoying its benefits is to stay up-to date.

³⁸ Trengove, J. A. et al., op. cit., p. 4

3.2. Brief history of the internet

The internet is the newest and the youngest medium, having been around in its current form for just about 20 years. The first interconnected computer network was developed as a joint project between the US military and several research organisations, and went live in 1969. New advances came slowly at first: network email was invented in 1971 (though the system was very slow and primitive), international connections were established in 1973, the term “internet” was first used in 1974 and the first real online protocols were introduced in the 1980s.³⁹

Everything changed in the early 1990s as Tim Berners-Lee, acknowledged as the creator of the internet as we know it today, introduced the public with the indispensable parts of the mass use of the internet - the first URL protocol, web browser software and the World Wide Web.

By 1993, various businesses started taking an interest in the internet. However, the internet was primarily designed as a strictly educational and non-commercial medium. There was a large debate about whether they were permitted to use the internet for commercial purposes, and eventually, the businesses won out and the last of the restrictions were dissolved in 1995.

Early internet giants like Yahoo and Amazon launched their online platforms in the mid-1990s, and Google launched in 1998, taking search to a new level of accuracy and convenience. Other commercial websites, like the auction site eBay, began to dominate the web, determining and even enhancing the interactive and global commercial potential of the internet.

Since the mid-1990s the Internet has had a tremendous impact on culture and commerce. In 2004, the concept of “web 2.0”, the interactive, commercial, cooperative and user-centric web, came to life. Its main characteristics were the rise of social networking, the invention of tools that made creating and customising personal pages increasingly simple, and the big push by online marketers to make their advertising and products more accessible and desirable to online markets.

³⁹ Trengove, J. A. et al., op. cit., p. 6

Internet Users in the World Distribution by World Regions - 2012

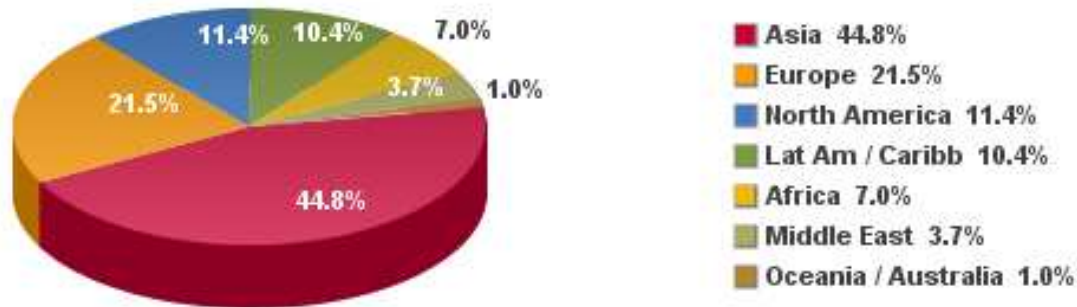


Figure 5: Internet users in the world in 2012 (source: Internet World Stats⁴⁰)

The Internet continues to grow, driven by greater and greater amounts of online information, knowledge, entertainment and social networking available for the modern users. Overall Internet usage has seen tremendous growth. In the early 1990s, it was estimated that the traffic and capacity of the public Internet grew at rates of about 100% per year. There was then a brief period of explosive growth in 1995 and 1996. During those two years, traffic grew by a factor of about 100, which is about 1,000% per year⁴¹.

By 2010, there were already 1 billion Google searches every day, 300 million Internet users reading blogs, and 2 billion videos viewed daily on YouTube⁴². In 2012, there were 2.4 billion people using the internet⁴³ (the figure 5 shows internet users by world regions), while in 2013, over 2.7 billion people were internet users, which corresponds to 39% of the world's population.⁴⁴ It is estimated that in 2020, the number of internet users will surpass 5 billion people.⁴⁵ Taking that into account, it does not come as a surprise that the internet has become the main medium for modern marketing.

⁴⁰ <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm>, retrieved on June 20, 2014

⁴¹ Coffman, K. G. and Odlyzko, A. M (1988), *The size and growth rate of the Internet*, AT&T Labs, p.2, available at: <http://www.dtc.umn.edu/~odlyzko/doc/internet.size.pdf>, retrieved on February 21, 2014

⁴² <http://www.antaranews.com/en/news/71940/google-earth-demonstrates-how-technology-benefits-ris-civil-society-govt>, retrieved on February 21, 2014

⁴³ <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm>, retrieved on June 20, 2014

⁴⁴ <http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/facts/ICTFactsFigures2013-e.pdf>, retrieved on February 21, 2014

⁴⁵ <http://www.networkworld.com/news/2010/010410-outlook-vision-predictions.html?page=1>, retrieved on February 24, 2014

3.3. The first step of online marketing - websites

In 1995 the internet was completely commercialized when the last restrictions on the use of the Internet for the purpose of commercial traffic were removed, and immediately, internet marketing boomed. The first marketing activity online started with the creation of simple, text-based websites with basic information about a product or company. Early websites had only text, but as the web tools evolved, so did the websites, incorporating images, sounds, videos and more advanced formatting styles.

Website is basically a set of related web pages served from a single web domain. A website is hosted on at least one web server, depending on its size and the number of visitors and is accessible exclusively via the internet. All publicly accessible websites collectively constitute the World Wide Web. Websites can be divided into two broad categories: static and dynamic.

Static websites usually display the same information to all the visitors. Comparing to traditional marketing, they are similar to handing out a printed brochure to customers or clients. The static websites offer pre-defined and standardised information to the users which may include information about a company and its products and services through text, photos, animations, audio, video and navigation menus. Their information will be provided consistently and uniformly to all the visitors for an extended period of time and they do not allow the direct engagement with the audience.

Dynamic websites are personalised websites which are able to change according to the user's preferences. By storing and reading back browser cookies or by creating a series of pages that reflect the previous history of clicks, dynamic website can communicate with the user's website browser in order to provide information in some way personalized to the requirements of the individual user. JavaScript, a dynamic computer programming language, is also built into most modern web browsers and it allows the website creators to send code to the web browser that instructs it how to interactively modify page content and communicate with the web server if needed.

The latest of the dynamic websites are the interactive websites which are part of the web 2.0 community of sites and they allow direct communication between the site owner and the site visitor. Interactive website cannot be developed by every company which seeks attention online, but they can easily be used for the purpose of marketing a service or a product, or raising brand awareness.

An event's website is its most important tool for creating web presence, and therefore it is the cornerstone of any online marketing strategy. A website is the one part of the web that is completely devoted to a particular event, its brand and the marketing message. It is every brand's home on the web, the site that anyone can visit for up-to-date

facts, information, offers, community and other features. In other words, it is the equivalent of an online business card.

Having a website has become an indispensable part of internet marketing strategy. It is a place where marketers can express their brand's message fully, in whatever way they want. They are generally not constrained by anything except their own imagination and, of course, their budget. A website is not just an information page; it can be a powerful marketing and business tool. For example, if an event organiser analyses the data on who visits his page, he can get a good idea of who is interested in his event.

3.4. Banner ads and pop-ups

While website is a marketing tool which is the first step of each and every online marketing campaign, there are numerous other marketing tools available online. Even though some of them, such as banner ads and pop-ups are already a bit outdated and perceived as too intrusive, they still continue generating at least a small portion of the total return on investment. Their time has still not completely passed, and even when they become unnecessary and undesired, we will most certainly see their influence in the future marketing strategies.

Banner ad is a rectangular image that can be placed anywhere on a website, and it is one of the most widely used forms of advertising online. The ad usually highlights itself with different colours, size and motion. It can be a punch line, a question or even a video. As almost every other part of the internet, it has evolved with the discovery of newer tools and programmes. In the beginning, the banner was a non-moving square with a text and/or picture, but today it is often a video that starts with a mouse over.

The first banner ad appeared in 1994, and it stated "Have you ever clicked your mouse right HERE? You will."⁴⁶ As expected, people started clicking on the ad more for curiosity than for the need to buy the service advertised, and that urge did not change a lot. At first the click-through rate (CTR) of banner ads was high, on average 78%. However, today, the CTR of banner ads has dropped to less than 1%.

Despite the considerable drop in CTR, banner ads are not dead. Their greatest advantage is that their return on investment is not only measured by the click-through rate, but also by producing brand awareness. It has been found that while repetition reduces CTR, it enhances brand awareness (Robinson et al 2007)⁴⁷. However, marketers have to

⁴⁶ Trengove, J. A. et al., op. cit, p. 111

⁴⁷ Eriksen, K. and Hemmingsen, C., *Online marketing. New models of advertising?*, Aalborg University, Aalborg, p. 27

become much more original with their banner advertising, delivering ads only to people they really want to reach, proving once again that targeting is everything.

The pop-ups are defined by a new page of the current browser being open on top of the one the user is currently visiting. Pop-ups can be designed to appear when a website is loading, after a period of time is spent on a website or upon leaving the site. There are different variations of pop-ups, such as pop-in where something is blurred or covered at the visited website in order to advertise for something.

Another variation is pop-under where the other website opens under the currently visited one. As pop-up ads became widespread and took up whole computer screens, many users learned to immediately close the pop-up ads that appeared over a site without looking at them. Pop-under ads do not immediately disable user's ability to view the site content, and thus usually remain unnoticed until the main browser window is closed or minimized, leaving the user's attention free for the advertisement.

The pop-up has been perceived as very annoying, and has often been compared to the advertising breaks on TV. Even a several pop-up killers, small programs that terminate the pop-up before it opens, have been introduced online. Although the pop-up is perceived as more annoying than the banner ad, their success rate is often higher according to Baker, cited in Eriksen⁴⁸: "Still, some advertisers cling to pop-ups. Despite aggravations, ad execs say that 2% of them entice Web-surfers to click - four times the rate of traditional banner ads."

However, even though banner ads, pop-ups and their variations create a certain amount of visits of the advertised websites, they are not the main marketing strategy of any company, but just a secondary one. Primary marketing strategies include much more than just creating an alluring and tempting picture or link to click on and placing it somewhere on the internet, on whichever website, showing it to everybody and hoping that somebody will actually click on it. They are about placing a right ad to a right place of a right website, in order for the right person to see it. That way the clicking on the ad and visiting the advertised website is not something to hope for; it is something that is almost a certainty.

3.5. Search engines

The purpose of any website is to reach new and already existing customers. It is every marketer's virtual office and every event's virtual pamphlet. However, as in real life, people first must hear about a certain company or its product in order to decide to visit its office. Word of mouth plays a significant role in every consumer's decision to visit a

⁴⁸ Eriksen, K. and Hemmingsen, C., op. cit, p. 29

certain website and find out more about a particular company or a product. Nevertheless, lately search engines have overtaken the role of the main source of information.

A search engine, like Google or Yahoo, is a specialised kind of database containing software programs, called spiders or robots, which discover all the websites on the internet and then order them based on relevance to a particular search query. Search engine's spiders continuously "crawl" the web in order to gather information and index it in their database. Information is also cross-referenced between websites, created by links, to create a spider web of information in search engine databases.

As search engine's spiders "crawl" websites, they use special mathematical formulas called search algorithms to help them organise, file and rank information in order of relevance to a particular search query. Each search engine uses different search algorithms and will therefore not necessarily return the same search results.

In order for search engine to know how to rank a certain websites, it needs to be able to access the complete content of the website and index it. Search engine's spiders crawl every page of every website, they read all the content and they index it according to the keywords on each page. When someone searches for a keyword, search engine examines its database of websites for the most relevant content and shows it to the user.

3.5.1. Search engine optimisation

When people search for specific keywords, the aim of every website is to be at the top of the page, or somewhere on the first page at the very least. However, no paid tactics will influence the position of a website and help achieve a high ranking in a search engine. A website must fulfil other conditions in order to be placed on the first page of the search engine's results. The tactics which can help a website optimise its content and improve its popularity with search engines in order to be placed on the top of the results are called search engine optimisation.

Search engine optimisation, known as SEO, is one of the most important aspects of online marketing and it is very complex. Search engines have special processes for deciding which web page shows up first in their lists of search results. SEO is the process of getting a web page as high up on that list as possible.

The term search engine optimisation was coined when the concept of search engines emerged in the early 1990s, but has evolved rapidly since the arrival of Google. At its beginnings, SEO had no structure: people simply added popular keywords to the website's meta-tags - special HTML code that describes the website to a search engine - even if they were unrelated to the contents of the website. While adding keywords to meta-tags and selecting keywords to optimise content on a website is legal, many people abused SEO

tactics. There were many tricks used to provide higher ranking of the website and the search engines were not sophisticated enough to detect many of these scams.

Finally, in the early 21st century, Google entered the search market arena and changed the rules of SEO dramatically by introducing the concept of backlinks to rank a website, rather than simply analysing the content on a web page which is far easier to manipulate. Today, SEO has moved to a new era of sophistication. Search engines have come a long way in fighting SEO spam, and while it still exists, it is not a viable strategy for any legitimate business that wants to gain long-term visibility on search engine results.

There are many technical ways of improving a position of a certain web page on search engine's result list and the most important ones are:

- **Keywords:** when somebody searches online, one of the ways that a search engine knows that a particular page is relevant to the search request is that the same words appear on the web page as in the search term that was used. Therefore, the more frequently these keywords appear on a web page, the more relevant that page will be to a search engine for the query that was made.
- **Content hierarchy:** another way that a search engine identifies relevant content is by analysing content areas on a web page. Some areas are valued above others in terms of importance: for example, a search engine considers the main page header to be more important than sub-headers. Similarly, it will consider sub-headers to be more important than a paragraph of body copy. Therefore, if the searched keyword appears in one of these important places such as website main header on one website, while it forms only a part of the copy on another one, a search engine will see the first website as more relevant for search queries relating to that keyword.
- **Linking:** the more places that point, or in other words link, to a certain website, the better. The internet is like a spider web: the more content that is available to read, click, forward and share, the better. Being mentioned and recommended by as many other websites as possible and having a high number of external websites that link back to the original website will help search engines see it as more credible, and will more likely rank it higher up on search results pages for related queries.

If a website is not on the first page of the search results, it is unlikely to get many visitors from any search engine. As much as 90% of internet users do not go past the top 30 search results (10 results per page)⁴⁹. If the website does not rank highly with Google, it

⁴⁹ Trengove, J. A. et al., op. cit, p. 122

will most likely not rank highly with other search engines either, since most other engines use ranking algorithms with similar logic in order to rank websites in results pages.

Considering the fact that 85% of internet users find websites through search engines and 75% of them have the intention to purchase a product or service by using search engines⁵⁰, SEO is a very lucrative, long-term marketing technique that will bear fruits if it is approached with determination and patience. With the right skills, knowledge and resources, SEO can be the simplest and the most important marketing tactic for achieving increased traffic and for increasing return on investment.

One of the main benefits of SEO is that it is considered non-biased because it only generates organic listings. Natural listings convert 30% more than paid listings and the percentage of clicks on organic search results increase with the level of education of online users⁵¹. It also has better return on investment comparing to any other internet marketing medium. The only “cost” spent on SEO is the time spent researching, calculating and analysing data, but the return can be considerable.

3.5.2. Pay-per-click ads

Organic search results which cannot be influenced by paying and which are ranked according to the relevancy of a site’s copy to a related search, as well as the number of quality links pointing to a site, are not the only type of search results. There are also nonorganic or paid results known as pay-per-click ads.

In 2000, Google revolutionized the world of marketing advertisement by introducing AdWords, an advertising service that allowed marketers to pay only for adverts that were clicked on by a customer. The strategy, which accounts for 95% of Google’s current revenue, became phenomenally successful and is nowadays the leading search engine advertising method.

Pay-per-click ads (PPC) are sponsored links displayed above or to the right of the organic search results. People have paid or bid on specific keywords in order to receive a high ranking in these sponsored results. Advertisers bid a certain amount that they’re willing to pay when someone clicks on that ad, which determines the position in which that listing will show on results pages – the higher an advertiser is willing to bid, the higher up the ad will show.

⁵⁰ Trengove, J. A. et al., op. cit, pp. 122-123

⁵¹ <http://www.seoresearcher.com/>, retrieved on March 15, 2014

Google is currently the leader in PPC, with Yahoo and Bing following behind. In today's increasingly Web-centric world, a well-managed and optimized PPC campaign can be the most cost-effective form of advertising. Indeed, search engines marketing is the fastest-growing segment of the advertising industry, accounting for roughly \$20 billion per year, or more than 40 percent of all online advertising dollars.⁵²

According to The Economist, "the benefits of the pay-per-click approach over traditional advertising (television, radio, print and billboards) are obvious. Since advertisers pay only to reach the small subset who actually responds to an advertisement, the quality of the leads generated is very high, and advertisers are prepared to pay accordingly. Google made most of its \$6.1 billion in revenue last year from pay-per-click advertising."⁵³

3.6. Email marketing

With an estimated 294 billion emails sent each day and over 1.9 billion email users worldwide⁵⁴, it is no surprise that electronic communication has replaced traditional alternatives.

Email (electronic mail) has increasingly become a trend for marketers to communicate with current and prospective customers, a method that was formally called direct marketing. Marketing by email is so popular because marketers are able to send direct messages to potential customers, which means that campaigns can be extremely targeted and more affordable than traditional channels, while the return on investment is measurable. Emails are usually sent with the intention to sell, promote, educate, inform or persuade and are most commonly packaged in the form a newsletter, flyer, competition or sales promotion.

Email marketing is the modern-day direct marketing equivalent and, because it is virtual, it allows a two-way conversation to be initiated and maintained. Email marketing, when done correctly, can have a very high success rate. Email marketing offers a great amount of advantages – it is quick and simple, it offers the possibility of reaching thousands of people with one message, it is a much cheaper channel of distribution compared to traditional marketing options and it helps build relationship with customers.

Unfortunately, as with many marketing techniques, the good is accompanied by the bad. In this case, the bad is spam: unsolicited commercial messages sent in bulk to people

⁵² <http://www.wsiwebmark.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/UnderstandingPPCWhitepaper.pdf>, retrieved on March 27, 2014

⁵³ Ibidem

⁵⁴ Trengove, J. A. et al., op. cit, p. 77

they are not directly intended to. In 2010 alone, 90% of all emails sent per day were spam.⁵⁵ Although these statistics are high, email marketing is not a dying technique. However, marketers need to ensure that they do not abuse this medium and must know the rules of the game so that they can craft unique, inbox-friendly, customer-relevant emails that convert to sales.

Despite some failed marketing strategies, online marketing recovered and grew rapidly in tandem with the rise of the social, sharing based web known as web 2.0. The last and most profound change to the marketing space was the rise of social media, which was gradual from 2004 and meteoric from 2006. Social media platforms, such as social networking sites, opened the space for user-filtered and recommended content – including marketing material. As the social media platforms grew and people created exponentially more connections with each other, the vision of viral marketing – the online equivalent of word of mouth – became real.

⁵⁵ Trengove, J. A. et al., op. cit, p. 77

4. SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATION

Throughout its history, the internet has reinvented itself many times – and the changes are far from over. The current web is dominated by socialising, cooperation, sharing and personal entertainment. People of all ages are spending more and more time online and are turning to the internet for better services, convenience and life-enhancing tools. With six out of every seven people in the world having internet access and nearly one in every four people using at least one social network⁵⁶, it does not come as a surprise that most of the companies have moved the focus of their businesses to the online sphere. 2010 was the first year where online advertising spend overtook the amount of money spent on newspaper advertising in the USA. It was the same year that online readership overtook traditional newspaper readership, which illustrates just how large an impact the internet has had on the marketing and advertising industry.

If any single trend exemplifies the online space of today, it is the social media. The entire premise of web 2.0 is based on the ability to network with peers and likeminded communities using technology. Social media has incredible power to steer opinions and spread messages, making it both extremely valuable and very risky to use. Social media include social networks, blogs and forums, which will all be described in continuation. In addition, the phenomenon of viral marketing which could not exist without the social media will be mentioned.

4.1. Social networks

Social networking, one of the most widely used forms of social media, is an online activity in which friends or peers in a social group interact with each other using a central website or application to transmit messages. These messages can contain text, images, videos, links or other sharable media. Social networks allow users to create virtual approximations of their real-world social relationships and facilitate the sharing of news and content. Their focus is usually on immediate, sharing-based casual interactions between acquaintances, though this can vary depending on the platform. Despite the differences between the social networks, there are some characteristics of social networking in general:

- Connecting - this is by far the most important part of the entire social networking process. Web users build complex networks of friends, family, colleagues and strangers and devise ways of communicating with these groups.

⁵⁶ <http://socialmediatoday.com/irfan-ahmad/1993606/global-overview-internet-mobile-and-social-media-engagement-and-usage-infographi>, retrieved on March 10, 2014

- Sharing - the default communication method on a social network is sharing – passing interesting, funny, shocking or otherwise relevant content between people. Social networks are built to make sharing as easy as possible. Sharing good, useful and entertaining content raises users' credibility in the eyes of their peers.
- Engaging - while sharing is vital, engaging with other users and their shared material is equally so. Whether this engagement is a simple “like”, “retweet” or a comment, it is important to take an active role in shaping the message around the content. Also, it is easy to engage directly in conversation with any other individual or group of users, communicating meaningfully with them. Essentially, social media marketing is about building communities.

4.1.1. A brief history of social networking

The first prototype social networks were launched in the late 1990s. Classmates.com was the first on the scene in 1995, operating under the premise that people wanted to connect with old friends and schoolmates. The site took off quickly, and was copied by less successful imitations like SixDegrees. Then, in 2002, the new wave of social networks revolutionised the industry. Friendster was the first modern social network and was an instant and massive success. It was followed a year later by LinkedIn, a more serious business network and MySpace, a “cooler” site for sharing music and games.

Everything changed in 2006 when Facebook was launched to the general public (it had been available to US students since 2004). It gave users a new degree of immediacy and entertainment, packaged in a simple, minimalist interface. Its functionality quickly grew as applications and tools were added, making it the richest content-sharing platform on the web. Because it was such a generalist site, Facebook opened up the market for niche networks that catered for specific nationalities, groups, hobbies and users. The final revolution came in 2007 with the arrival of Twitter into the mainstream. The microblogging site allowed users to share thoughts more simply and directly than ever before and became the web's first stop for breaking news and information.

4.1.2. How can social networks be used as a marketing tool?

As with traditional marketing, the best way to get a product into the public space is to put it somewhere where the right people (the target market) will find it and start a conversation about it. Social networks, with their wealth of personal and preference data, make it that much easier to find, speak to and convert every market. There are three essential components of marketing on social networks:

- Advertising – the importance of placing the online adverts in the right places and targeting the correct keywords and users has already been mentioned. Social networking takes this idea a step further because it involves marketing in a social space – where adverts and promotional material are less welcome. This makes it both harder to market – given the fact that people do not want to have an advertising message forced on them, as well as more powerful since the social space is ideal for sharing, recommending and spreading adverts between friends.
- Building a brand presence - the “soft sell” part of social network marketing communication. By building a brand presence on a social network, an event becomes a social actor that can engage with customers. It also becomes a cornerstone of event’s PR campaign.
- Word of mouth - the riskiest and least controllable aspect of social networking, but one that can reap considerable rewards. Online word of mouth spreads best over social networks and can be harnessed and steered by a clever online marketer. People are more likely to try something new based on what people in their social group have recommended – so every marketer’s aim with social media is to try to get the right people to speak about his brand and pass on the message.

Not all social media are created equally. Some are general sites for chatting with friends and some are serious and intricate business networks. Most are impossible to fully define because they have their own unique combinations of features, tools and uses. In addition, not all are well suited to marketing strategies or may require radically different approaches. In continuation, the most popular social networks will be described, as well as the marketing options they offer to the event organizers.

4.2. Facebook

Facebook is an online social networking service whose name comes from a colloquialism for the directory given to students at some American universities. Facebook was founded on February 4, 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg with his college roommates and fellow Harvard University students. The founders had initially limited the website's membership to Harvard students, but later expanded it to colleges in the Boston area, the Ivy League and Stanford University. It gradually added support for students at various other universities before it opened to high-school students and eventually to anyone aged 13 and over. Facebook now allows anyone who claims to be at least 13 years old to become a registered user of the website.

Users must register before using the site, after which they may create a personal profile, add other users as friends, exchange messages, and receive automatic notifications when they update their profile. According to the statistics from April 2014, Facebook has exceeded 1.2 billion subscribers and is still growing steadily,⁵⁷ making it the most popular social network in the world.

4.2.1. How to use Facebook for advertising events

Facebook has become a must-be-there place for all the events who wish to attract new visitors. Over 70% of marketers have stated that they have used Facebook to successfully gain new customers.⁵⁸ Facebook advertising is becoming all the more perfect every day, and the range of possibilities offered are making it the primary tool to achieve the greatest results in the range of web marketing. Following the example of search engines, Facebook also offers the possibility of free and paid advertising.

As far as free advertising on Facebook is concerned, an event should have an official profile page and the event page created in Facebook Events application. The profile page with the most important information about the event should be accessible permanently and the event page should be accessible for a specified period of time, most importantly a few months before the event takes place. Both the profile page and the event page must contain all the details about the event and should include pictures and videos in order to provide as much information as possible. Doing so will make the event easier to find and the more details there are available, the more people will actually register and attend.

The official event profile page must be appealing and interesting. The marketer should not only post event updates on the wall, but also additional content relevant material. That way the attention of the potential visitor will be kept during the whole year, not only while the event is being held. The posts should be kept short and simple: according to Facebook⁵⁹, posts that are on the shorter side — between 100 and 250 characters — get about 60% more likes, comments and shares. The profile should also appeal to the visual sense. Photo albums, pictures and videos drive engagement on Facebook Pages. On the profile page, the event marketer can promote services or programme, interact with established customers and create opportunities to reach new visitors.

⁵⁷ <http://www.statisticbrain.com/facebook-statistics/>, retrieved on March 10, 2014

⁵⁸ <http://www.socialystacked.com/2014/01/the-growth-of-social-media-in-2014-40-surprising-stats-infographic/#sthash.klXjZt6j.dpbs>, retrieved on April 10, 2014

⁵⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/business/overview>, retrieved on April 10, 2014

Besides communicating with the current customers and establishing connection with the future ones via Facebook profile page and Facebook event page, there is also a paid marketing strategy available to the event marketers – Facebook Ads.

Facebook Ads can be found in the sidebar or in the News Feed. Ads in News Feed are much more efficient - the average CTR on the banner on the sidebar is about 0.04% and in the News Feed it is 2%⁶⁰. One of the greatest advantages of Facebook Ads is that the expense of the advertising is completely controlled – the marketer sets up the budget for the day, Facebook shows the add to the previously targeted market, charges a certain amount for every time somebody clicks on the ad until the amount set up as the budget is spent and then just stops showing it to the people that day. Then it is up to the marketer to decide whether the budget generated sufficient response, or should it be increased or decreased.

The most valuable feature of Facebook Ads is the vast opportunities of targeting it offers. The marketer can choose the people who will see the ads - according to location, gender, age and interests. The latter is actually the reason why Facebook Ads are worth so much - they have information about our interests based on the pages we liked and therefore can accurately target specific people in advertising.

Advertising on Facebook has become one of the leading online marketing strategies, if not the most important one. That does not come as a surprise considering the fact that 49% of companies advertised on Facebook had five times greater return on ad spent while 70% of them had three times greater ROI⁶¹. In addition to being the largest social network with the greatest number of active users, Facebook is also the most engaging social network with more than 3, 2 billion likes and comments every day⁶², as well as the social network where people spend most of their time. Therefore, Facebook presence is essential for every event which seeks permanent success.

4.3. Twitter

Twitter is an online social networking and microblogging service that enables users to send and read short 140-character text messages, called tweets. Registered users can read and post tweets, but unregistered users can only read them. Users can group posts together by topic or type by use of hashtags – words or phrases prefixed with a “#” sign. Similarly, the “@” sign followed by a username is used for mentioning or replying to other users. To repost a message from another Twitter user and share it with one's own followers, users can retweet the message.

⁶⁰ <http://www.istokpavlovic.com/blog/>, retrieved on April 20,2014

⁶¹ <https://www.facebook.com/business/power-of-advertising>, retrieved on April 20, 2014

⁶² Ibidem

Twitter was created in March 2006 by Jack Dorsey, Evan Williams, Biz Stone and Noah Glass and by July 2006, the site was launched. The service rapidly gained worldwide popularity, with 645,750,000 registered users in January 2014, 215 million of them being active users who post an average 58 million tweets per day⁶³. Nowadays Twitter is one of the ten most-visited websites⁶⁴ and has been described as “The SMS of the Internet.”⁶⁵

4.3.1. How to use Twitter for advertising events

Advertising on Twitter starts with creating the Twitter account for the event and customizing the profile page. The second step is creating the hashtag for the event so people can easily identify the conversations surrounding it in order to listen and participate. A hashtag is simply a keyword with a pound sign in front of it that people can include in their tweets. Attendees interested in the event can also search for the hashtag on Twitter in order to be informed and to follow updates about it. Then the marketers should tweet on a daily basis in an interesting way, not only about the event itself but about other relevant content as well. The rules of tweeting are the same as for the Facebook posts - the usage of photos and videos is highly recommended and Twitter profile should be used for promotion of the event and its programme, interaction with established customers and creating opportunities to reach new visitors.

Twitter also offers the possibility of paid advertising by promoting trends, accounts or particular tweets, all of them being clearly marked with a “promoted” icon. First and most important step of promoting on Twitter is targeting. Twitter offers targeting by interest, gender, geography, language or by the device used – mobile or desktop, and shows the promoted trend, account or tweet only to the users targeted by the marketer. Promoted tweets are sold on a cost-per-engagement (CPE) basis, meaning advertisers only pay when a user replies to, clicks or favourites the tweet.

Promoted trends appear at the top of the Trends list and stay there for the entire day, promoted accounts appear in the “Who to follow” part of the user’s profile, while the promoted tweets can appear in the user’s timeline or search results. As expected, promoted tweets in search results are far more effective than promoted tweets in timeline feed, considering the fact they are triggered by the topic the user is attempting to find. Therefore, CTR for promoted tweets in the search results is 88% higher than promoted tweets in user’s

⁶³ <http://www.statisticbrain.com/twitter-statistics/>, retrieved on April 24, 2014

⁶⁴ <http://www.alexam.com/siteinfo/twitter.com>, retrieved on April 24, 2014

⁶⁵ <http://www.business-standard.com/india/news/swine-flu%5Cs-tweet-tweet-causes-online-flutter/356604/>, retrieved on April 24, 2014

timeline feed⁶⁶. Acquiring large number of followers on Twitter and thus becoming a so-called influencer on this social network is not an easy job, but the benefits available at the end of that road are worth the time and effort.

4.4. Instagram

Instagram is an online photo-sharing, video-sharing and social networking service that enables its users to take pictures and videos, apply digital filters to them and share them on a variety of social networking services, such as Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and Flickr. It was created by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger and launched in October 2010. The service rapidly gained popularity, with over 200 million active users as of April 2014.⁶⁷ Instagram has a very loyal fanbase: more than 70% of Instagram users log in at least once a day.⁶⁸

Instagram's distinctive feature is that it confines photos to a square shape, similar to Polaroid images, in contrast to the 4:3 aspect ratio typically used by mobile device cameras. Users are also able to record and share short videos lasting for up to 15 seconds. Soon after its release Instagram added hashtags in order to help users discover both photographs and each other. Instagram encourages users to make tags both specific and relevant, rather than tagging generic words like "photo" in order to make photographs stand out and to attract like-minded Instagrammers.

4.4.1. How to use Instagram for advertising events

At first glance, it seems like Instagram does not offer that much marketing possibilities. There are no paid ads available; no reposting of any kind and hardly any comments considering the fact everything is visual. Even if someone would try posting an ad in a comment of a certain photo, the comment would soon be banned. However, Instagram has one channel of communication, seemingly naive but yet very powerful – the “like” button. People post photos on Instagram because of likes. If the event marketer likes certain photos – but not all of them – it does not look like an advertisement. In addition, people enjoy getting likes so much that it prevents them from perceiving likes as a way of promotion.

⁶⁶ <http://www.businessinsider.com/how-to-advertise-on-twitter-to-get-the-best-results-2013-2>, retrieved on April 24, 2014

⁶⁷ <http://expandedramblings.com/index.php/important-instagram-stats/#.U3J6tfl6BBg>, retrieved on April 29, 2014

⁶⁸ Ibidem

Therefore, the advertising on Instagram includes creating the profile for the event and the hashtag which clearly states the name of the event and even the location of the event as well. Then the marketer must post interesting and appealing pictures and by doing so attract as many followers as possible. The followers which visit the event will most certainly post photos of themselves during the event thus promoting the event in an unbiased way. The event marketer should then follow and like the photos of current and potential visitors. Unlike other social networks, Instagram enables communication solely based on photos. Considering the well known saying “A picture is worth a thousand words”, advertising on Instagram is very important marketing strategy and it will be even more important with the introduction of the paid advertising announced by the company.

4.5. Google+

Google+ is a social networking and identity service that is owned and operated by Google Inc. Google has described Google+ as a “social layer” that enhances many of its online properties and stated that it is not simply a social networking website, but “an online community of people with a common interest who use a Web site or other technologies to communicate with each other and share information, resources, etc”⁶⁹. It is the second-largest social networking site in the world after Facebook with 300 million monthly active users.⁷⁰

A Google+ user profile is a public account of a user that is attached to many Google properties. In addition to basic social networking elements, it introduces the users to the “circles”, the core feature of the Google+ social platform. It enables users to organize people into groups or lists for sharing across various Google products and services. Once a circle is created, a Google+ user can share specific private content to only that circle - for example work themed content can be shared only with work colleagues, while family could see more personal content and photos. The option to share public or with everyone is always available.

4.5.1. How to use Google+ for advertising events

In one of the recently conducted studies, Google+ ranks second among the most effective social media tools that are great at building brand awareness. Just like with other marketing tools, Google+ requires the event marketer to provide quality content so that the marketing strategy can be effective. Making sure that the content on the website is

⁶⁹ <http://thenextweb.com/socialmedia/2012/03/08/for-the-last-time-lets-all-say-it-together-google-is-not-a-social-network/>, retrieved on May 4, 2014

⁷⁰ <http://expandedramblings.com/index.php/google-plus-statistics/#.U3KQYPI6BBg>, retrieved on May 4, 2014

interesting is important in order to get followers to join the event's circle. A circle is a group of people who are interested in the event and would like to get information about it.

A very important step in advertising on Google+ is adding a +1 icon on the event's official website. Once visitors click on the Google+ like button, they will automatically receive updates on the event on their Google+ account. In addition, the number of +1's a website has influence the Google Search results - the greater the number, the higher the ranking.

Google+ is the newest social network taking into account only the big ones, and its advertising options are still to come. It is almost certain that Google+ will join forces with Google's AdWords platform, which will probably make Google+ the leading internet marketing option. That is something all the marketers interested in future success should have in mind and be ready to take the opportunity as soon as it becomes available.

4.6. YouTube

YouTube is a video-sharing website, created by three former PayPal employees in February 2005 and owned by Google since late 2006, on which users can upload, view and share videos. Most of the content on YouTube has been uploaded by individuals, but some media corporations offer some of their material via YouTube, as part of the YouTube partnership program. Unregistered users can watch videos while registered users can also upload an unlimited number of videos.

YouTube is somewhat different than the preceding four social networks; instead of allowing people to connect and communicate via individual profiles, its primary function is to serve as a publishing platform for video content. However, YouTube is not just about watching videos. The site also includes various features such as channels, comments, ratings and recommendations - not to mention integrations with other social networks - that plants it firmly in the category of social media.

4.6.1. How to use YouTube for advertising events

More than 1 billion unique users visit YouTube each month, over 6 billion hours of videos are watched each month on YouTube and 100 hours of video are uploaded every minute⁷¹ – these are just some numbers that clearly show the role that YouTube has in people's everyday lives.

⁷¹ <http://www.youtube.com/yt/press/statistics.html>, retrieved on May 6, 2014

YouTube is well known for its many “from rags to riches” success stories. All of them came with no expense – just by creating a channel and posting regularly interesting and appealing videos. Every event must have a channel of its own and should post as many videos as possible. Unlike on other social networks, the administrator of the channel should not bother with other content related material – this time only the event related material should be posted so that the purpose of the channel could be unmistakably understood by the viewers.

However, YouTube also offers paid advertising options. In cooperation with AdWords every video posted on YouTube can be promoted. There are various options available for the paid video to be shown to the users: In-Stream - video adverts which play before or during another video from a YouTube partner; In-Slate - ads shown at the start of YouTube content which is ten minutes or longer; In-Search - much like the style of AdWords text ads, In-Search ads appear when someone searches YouTube; In-Display – a bit different to other YouTube ad formats because they do not strictly serve the ads on YouTube’s website. Ads can appear beside YouTube content which is embedded on other websites which are part of the Google Display Network. All the promoted videos are charged only when the user actually watches them or click on them, not if the video is skipped.

In addition, there are great targeting options available such as targeting by age, gender, interest, topic of the video, use of keywords or managed placement – where the marketer lists specific pages he or she would like to have the ads on. Last, but not the least, posting videos on YouTube and advertising there enhances Google Search ranking considering the fact YouTube is a part of Google Inc. With all the options available for free or paid advertising, it is obvious that YouTube advertising should be one of the main marketing strategies of every event.

4.7. Forums

Forums are online community message boards where users can post and reply to topics. While forums are not as immediate as instant messaging, they allow conversations to grow as participants discuss a topic publicly. Users can link their accounts to friends’ profiles and can gain credibility based on the number of posts they have written and discussions they have contributed to. Forums can either stand alone as a community platform, or can be integrated into larger social networks - for example, Facebook Pages and Google Groups have forums.

4.7.1. How to use forums for advertising events:

In almost all cases, forums are very tightly focused around a single topic called the thread. If the thread involves the event itself, this makes them a good place for niche product marketing, though this should be kept separate from the actual discussions themselves as this is considered spam in most forums' terms. Forums also provide a unique opportunity for building a relationship with the event representative in a social space. An event marketer can use forums actively by joining relevant discussions in order to communicate with the audiences to answer their questions or simply tell them about the event itself and its programme. The down side of this marketing strategy is that all the forums are moderated; if a moderator suspects someone of trying to advertise, that person will be reprimanded or even kicked off the forum.

The other way forums are used as an advertising tool is without the marketer's active involvement – common people interested in the event usually share their thoughts, expectations, plans of visiting it or experience from the past visits. This comes with a risk – if the past experience of a certain person who posts on a particular forum is bad, it may lead to spreading negative opinion about the event. On the other hand, a positive comment of an unbiased person will generate much more positive opinions than anything an event marketer can post.

4.8. Blogs

A blog (the contraction of “web log”) is an online tool that allows a user to publish articles or posts on any topic; it can also serve as a personal web journal. Good blogs are focused around a clearly defined topic and are updated regularly, though the frequency depends on the nature of the content. Ideally, blog articles are short, easy to read and discuss or explain one central idea.

4.8.1. How to use blogs for advertising events:

Blogs can be used in marketing by promoting and explaining an event's programme and by providing interesting and useful related content to readers. The social part of blogging has two aspects. First, readers can comment on a post by leaving a short comment and can engage in a discussion with other readers and the blogger. Second, blogs can form networks around related interests, or can join blogging communities - large portals that allow blogs to join the network under categories that are interesting to a particular reader.

The event marketer can contact an influencing blogger in order for him or her to promote the event. People who read the blog regularly will instantly be informed about it

and drawn to the event mentioned. In addition, this marketing strategy is considered unbiased, which adds additional value to the positive opinion created.

On the other hand, an event can have its own blog which should always add value to the readers without asking them to do anything in return. A blog should not be used to openly sell services, but rather to add value to the target market and raise brand awareness. An event's official blogger should always think first and foremost about what the readers will be interested in reading, not what he or she wants to tell them. The blog should always encourage audience interaction by simply asking about readers' opinion. A blog that has lots of reader interaction is likely to be more interesting to other readers and also encourages existing readers to return to the blog in the future.

In addition, another important aspect of using blogs as a marketing strategy is that links to articles and blogs make good content for sharing on other social networks which helps improve the website's ranking through SEO.

4.9. Viral Marketing

Viral marketing is an extremely popular concept nowadays which falls into the category of social media. Essentially, viral marketing is the online equivalent of traditional word-of-mouth marketing, which means that a message spreads from person to person, reaching an exponentially growing number of people as the message is passed along to acquaintances. A major component of viral communication is the meme – a message that spreads virally and embeds itself in the collective consciousness. Viral marketing is closely tied to social media, since social media platforms and their sharing functionality are the main way that a message is able to “go viral” online.

A media message can go viral in one of two ways. First, this can happen organically, when the message is picked up by chance by many people and is spread rapidly without any preplanning or intention. Organic viral media has no agenda or hidden purpose because it is driven by normal people rather than marketers; it simply spreads because of its entertainment value.

Controlled viral marketing is the opposite of this. It involves a very carefully planned, prepared and tailored message that is sent out through managed channels and monitored as much as possible. It has a distinct marketing spin, though this may not be immediately obvious, and is built to be an optimal viral message. Controlled viral marketing is part of a brand strategy and has previously defined and measurable goals. In general, the branded nature of the message has no effect on whether it will spread virally.

Viral marketing has itself become a bit of a viral concept and everyone is eager to launch their own campaigns. However, though it may seem random and effortless, viral

marketing is actually a very challenging and planned process which will not happen overnight. Viral marketing can create significant brand awareness; however it does not make a holistic online marketing campaign and should be just one of many tools used to create awareness and encourage interaction.

5. MARKETING STRATEGIES OF MUSIC FESTIVALS

As it was mentioned in the chapter 1, there are various types of events. The focus of this paper will be music festivals.

A music festival is a kind of arts or cultural festival that usually has a theme according to genre: just as there are various music genres, there are different types of music festivals, such as classical, rock, jazz, opera, popular or folk. A number of music festivals are held in nations and locations across the world every year. Bowen, cited in Park⁷², states that “unlike concerts, where individuals are generally drawn to hear and view a live performance of a specific artist, music festivals often involve a myriad of talent and may or may not follow a particular genre.” The size of music festivals vary, with some targeting international audiences and others reaching only a small community.

Music festivals are proven to influence communities in various ways - through tourism development, cultural development, community integration, city-image improvement and economic development. In order for the music festivals to have these beneficial results, event marketing must be strategically planned and implemented through festival programs. Festivals are businesses which are closely connected to marketing, and their success depends on their marketing⁷³.

According to Kotler and Keller⁷⁴, event marketing is promoting time-based events, such as major trade shows, artistic performances and company anniversaries. It is also defined as the activity of designing or developing a themed activity, occasion, display or exhibit (such as sporting event, music festival, fair or concert) to promote a product, cause or organization.⁷⁵

5.1. The importance of marketing of music festivals

Since the middle of the last century, marketing has taken over a key role in the effort to attract larger number of visitors - a necessity for making profit - and to promote culture at the same time. As there is a large number of different music festivals available to the customers, it is hard for a particular festival to distinguish itself. The role of marketing

⁷² Park, H. (2010), *Communicating with audiences*, Oregon, University of Oregon, p. 13

⁷³ Lee, K. Y. et al. (2008), Festivalscapes and patrons' emotions, satisfaction, and loyalty, *Journal of business research*, 61 (1), p. 56

⁷⁴ Kotler, P. and Keller, K., L., (2012), *Marketing management*, 14th edition, Prentice Hall, New Jersey, p.5

⁷⁵ <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/event-marketing.html>, retrieved on May 5, 2013.

is to offer more attractive benefits than other festivals and thus convince potential customers to choose that particular one over others.

Every marketing plan should consider customers' needs and there are always difficulties with establishing exactly what these needs are. There is frequently a gap between customers' needs and the marketing strategies of cultural festivals due to the characteristics of cultural products. The purpose of event marketing is to locate these gaps and plan ways to overcome them, not only to advertise and sell certain product or service.⁷⁶

Marketing is an integral part of the whole process of festivals and successful marketing of music festivals can bring beneficial impacts to organizations and communities. "Festivals are big business involving tremendous amounts of marketing."⁷⁷ That is, marketing functions as a vital part of the whole process and helps music festivals achieve success, which is the main objective of any festival. In order for marketing to be effective, understanding the market, the product and the audience is crucial.

What makes marketing of music festivals different from other types of marketing is the fact that cultural products are very complex due to the fact that they include intangible value. Colbert⁷⁸ describes cultural products as aesthetics, nonquantifiable and subjective. Therefore, the most important thing in the marketing of music festivals is to carefully analyze the characteristics of the cultural product and attract visitors which will appreciate that specific product. Bernstein⁷⁹ asserts that the ultimate artistic experience is the communication that happens between the performers and the audience, and marketing should facilitate this communication.

Marketing strategy of music festivals cannot be applied uniformly; it has to be modified to meet the needs and specifics of particular cultural product. Successful promotion of music festivals includes a number of activities, and the most important are:

- Detail research of the needs, demands and expectations of the target audience
- Defining the concept of the product
- Prediction of demand for the product
- Deciding the price of the ticket that the audience is willing to pay
- Planning and implementation of promotional activities of the event

⁷⁶ Allen, J. et al., op. cit., p.163

⁷⁷ Lee, K. Y. et al., op. cit., p. 56

⁷⁸ Colbert, F., (2007), *Marketing culture and the arts*, 3rd edition, HEC Montreal, Montreal, p. 55

⁷⁹ Bernstein, J. (2007), *Arts marketing insights: The dynamics of building and retaining performing arts audiences*, John Wiley & Sons, San Francisco, p. 16

- Coordination of all activities of event marketing

The most important goals of marketing of music festivals are to increase the awareness of the target audience by presentation and demonstrations of the product, to highlight the specific characteristics of the product which help it differentiate itself from other similar products and to build market recognition - all that in order to attract visitors and satisfy their needs and expectations. However, many studies argue that the main objective of the marketing strategies of music festivals should not be to attract the audiences to a one-time performance, but to establish and continue to build visitors' loyalty. Although marketers need to seek out new visitors, the marketing strategies of music festivals should first take into account the improvement of the experience for the already existing visitors.

5.2. The marketing mix of events

Marketing effectiveness is achieved by the optimal combination of instruments of the marketing mix of events. Finding the optimal combination of marketing mix of events is not only the job for the marketers, but the event managers as well. Marketing experts help event managers in the design of various marketing activities, which will integrate and support the programme of events, with the aim of creating and providing value to the event attendees. The marketing activities primarily involve activities related to the marketing mix of events, whose combining can affect the achievement of the defined goals of a particular event.

In the theory of marketing, marketing mix includes product, price, place and promotion. This concept is known as the four P's of marketing. As marketing concepts transit from the product-centric to customer-centric, people can be added to the marketing mix. The importance of customers in contemporary marketing led to creation of the four C's: customer value, customer costs, convenience, and communication⁸⁰. The logic of the differences is simple; the four P's represent the seller's mind, while the four C's represent the buyer's mind.

Under these circumstances, Kotler⁸¹ suggests that once the marketer thinks through the four C's for the targeting of customers, it becomes much easier to set the four P's. That is, marketers should begin their marketing research and strategy formulation from the perspective of customers. In the past, marketers did not consider customers' needs but focused only on attracting customers. The marketer could determine and lead the market

⁸⁰ Bernstein, J., op. cit., p. 89

⁸¹ Kotler, P. (2003), *Marketing insights from A to Z: 80 concepts every manager needs to know*, John Wiley & Sons, Hoboken, p. 109

regardless of customers' demands. In the contemporary situation, however, responding to customers' needs becomes the purpose of marketing, and customers actively have their opinions and share them with others.

5.3. Reverse event marketing

Promotion of music festivals is based on the improvement of the understanding of visitors, therefore, being aware of visitors' participation and giving it its deserved place is crucial. Bernstein⁸² argues that audience participation has been decreasing since the 1990s and states that the factors causing this include the difficulty to satisfy various audiences, the increasing level of education of certain populations, the rise in ticket prices and the high rate of the expansion of technology.

All these changes affected the retention of current visitors and the attraction of new ones which has changed the way of dealing with visitors through marketing. Under these circumstances, customers in the contemporary era have become "prosumers"⁸³. Being a prosumer means having power to influence the nature of the products that one is likely to purchase. Therefore, in contemporary marketing, the marketing concept has shifted from a product-centred market to a customer-centred market, emphasizing the characteristics, tastes, and demographics of customers.

The same group of authors describes the new phenomenon of the passage of power from the organizers to the visitors as reverse marketing⁸⁴. In the past, organizations designed their products, found customers and delivered information unilaterally. Contemporary customers, on the other hand, can participate in the initial state of production, choose information and deliver their requests to the organizations.

According to this trend, marketers can respond to reverse marketing by focusing on the customers' four C's: enhanced customer value, lower costs, improved convenience, and better communication⁸⁵. The central concept of reverse marketing is the respect of customers' needs and desires which leads to improved consumer reaction to products. That is, contemporary marketing is focused on building long-term relationships with existing customers rather than solely attracting new customers, as was the focus in traditional marketing.

⁸² Bernstein, J., op. cit., p. 10

⁸³ Kotler, P., et al. (2002), *Marketing moves: A new approach to profits, growth, and renewal*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston, p.36

⁸⁴ Ibidem, p.43

⁸⁵ Ibidem, p. 45

5.4. Co-branding of event and host destination

Event marketing managers must not only be concerned with their event's image but with the destination image too, working to establish and maintain good ones. They have to work closely together with the destination managers and the result of their joined activities should be positive effects of event on the destination and its brand, and vice versa, which leads to image transfer from event to destination.

Image transfer is the process that occurs when any of the benefits that visitors recognize in the event becomes the benefit of the host destination. Co-branding of the two brands, destination and event, is very sensitive. They share the image, which can be positive or negative. It is very important that the destination chooses an appropriate event to co-brand with. It is necessary to explore the brand of the event with regard to the destination image to achieve the desired results.

Great number of music festivals incorporates the name of the host destination into the festival name in order to make it more associated with the destination. However, the literature on branding indicates that the event should not always have the name of the destination. Poor connection of event and destination may result in negative brand building and the transfer of negative image. But if the destination organizes appropriate event, then the event can also be used as "brand extension" of the brand of the destination.

5.5. The role of event marketers

According to Chong⁸⁶, many event marketing studies defined an event marketer as a person who can help arts consumers to choose cultural products and improve the quality of the arts experience. He also states that in order to succeed, marketers need to be myth-makers; it is their responsibility to choose what fiction is to be created and what story needs to be told to get the customer believe their proposition.

In promotion of music festivals, the role of marketing managers is not only the mere selling of products – it is satisfying intangible consumers' needs, as well as building up consumers' confidence in their products. Therefore, they must have the ability to approach marketing strategically. Strategic marketing is not simply marketing strategies and tactics; it is the entire process of marketing in order to satisfy consumers' needs. In music festivals, the quality of the programs themselves cannot guarantee the success of the performances, thus marketing is an integral factor of success.

⁸⁶ Chong, D. (2002), *Arts management*, Routledge, London, pp. 85-86

The order of strategic marketing planning is analysis, segmentation, positioning, implementing and evaluation. The first step of analysis includes product analysis, audience analysis, and market analysis. After these analyses, a strategic marketing plan can be formulated.

Kotler et al.⁸⁷ concur that marketing strategies should pursue the successful methods of the past for the future of art-offering organizations. Marketers do not need to avoid successful old strategies because these can serve as a guide to new strategies. However, it is of extreme importance that the event marketing managers constantly monitor their environment and keep in touch with changing preferences of their current and potential market⁸⁸.

As the social environment changes, so do the marketing strategies and tactics. Aside from changing the focus of attention from the product to the customer, marketing strategies are affected by globalization and technology, like all the other industries are. Among numerous new trends in the development of technology, it is the Internet that brought the biggest changes in society.

When it comes to the effects of Internet on the promotion of music festivals, Bernstein⁸⁹ states that the Internet changed audience's habits for choosing products from package to choosing specific programs, as the easy availability and access of the Internet allows audiences to make rapid and spontaneous choices. Under these circumstances, event organizers have to adapt to this change in audience purchasing habits. In addition, as social media over the Internet, such as blogs, Facebook and Twitter have increasing popularity among the consumers, marketing strategies should consider these social media in order to interact with consumers and use them as useful channels of communication with the potential audience.

Gillin, cited in Park⁹⁰, argues that using social media in this way "is not a fad. People don't abandon technologies that make it easier for them to communicate." He also states that marketers should be early adopters of consumer-related technologies like social media, as their success depends on how easily and well they expand into these new channels. The popularity of the use of social media means that contemporary marketing strategies have definitely changed. While the Internet offers certain challenges to event

⁸⁷ Kotler, P., et al. (2002), *Marketing moves: A new approach to profits, growth, and renewal*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston, p. 5

⁸⁸ Bernstein, J., op. cit., p. 16

⁸⁹ Ibidem, Intro, xi

⁹⁰ Park, H., op. cit., pp. 20-22

organization, it also gives them new power, if they are able to accommodate themselves to its use.

6. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

This paper offers an insight into the importance of internet marketing communication in modern day life, especially for promoting events and music festivals in particular. The issue was researched on the case of EXIT music festival, using a questionnaire answered by a number of foreign and domestic visitors at the 2013 EXIT festival.

6.1. The EXIT festival highlights

EXIT Festival is the biggest music festival in Serbia. Even though nowadays it is associated with good vibrations and high spirits, its beginning was not that joyful. It was founded in 2000 in the University Park in Novi Sad as a student movement, fighting against the regime of the time and for democracy and freedom in Serbia. A decade of dissatisfaction was finally broken during EXIT and its 100-day-long programme: 34 big concerts were held, featuring the biggest bands from the country, along with the other cultural events: 12 drama plays were performed, over 120 movies were played, and there were 20 public discussions and 40 great parties that took place during the first year of EXIT Festival.⁹¹

It all began before the first democratic elections, on the bank of the Danube by the University campus, where young EXIT Festival visitors counted down the days of the current president by listening to the biggest concerts, dancing, partying, painting graffiti, acting, performing, discussing issues, watching movies and engaging in similar activities. The last concert was held on September 22nd 2000; two days prior to the presidential elections, in front of 20.000 people. The name EXIT symbolically represented the “exit” out of a decade-long suppression.

The next year, EXIT moved to the other side of the Danube, to the historic part of the city, the Petrovaradin Fortress. That was the first year EXIT was held as a genuine music festival of a European brand, which grew and improved over the years. The Petrovaradin fortress has an underground tunnel system that is 16 kilometres long. The unique location contributes to the atmosphere of the festival, providing outstanding acoustics. After centuries of turbulent history, the fortress is on the list of protected monuments as a historical, cultural and artistic centre of Novi Sad.

On the opposite side of the river, a magnificent view stretches over the second biggest Serbian city, Novi Sad, founded in 1694. During the long history of the city, the multicultural identity of the city has been maintained. Picturesque Novi Sad has a lot to

⁹¹ <http://exitfest.org/sr/content/zanimljivi-podaci-o-exitu>, retrieved on 10 May 2014

offer to its visitors. Besides rich history, the city is known for its splendid nightlife, amazing restaurant offers, interesting and authentic cafes, as well as the hospitality of the locals.

EXIT has gained international media attention over the years. The International edition of CNN featured an article on music festivals in the beginning of June 2011, which included Exit on the list of nine best festivals in the world⁹². In Euronews' May 2013 article on the world's leading festival destinations, Exit was included in the ten best European festivals in 2013⁹³. It has won the "Best Major Festival Award" in 2013⁹⁴ and was ranked one of the 10 Best Overseas Festivals at UK Festival Awards 2013⁹⁵.

The success of EXIT has greatly influenced the development of Serbian tourism. More than 60 different nationalities visit EXIT festival every year⁹⁶ and they always leave Serbia with smiling faces and great new memories. "The fact that the EXIT music festival became recognizable as one of the most popular events for young population all over the world, contributes to the creation of positive image of Serbia and attracting more visitors each year, giving the opportunity for new cross-cultural interactions."⁹⁷ Because of its impact on Serbian tourism, EXIT festival has been chosen as the case study of this paper.

6.2. Methodology of the research

EXIT festival is worldwide known music festival which owns its success to its excellent organization. Considering the fact that the number of EXIT festival visitors is increasing almost every year, or at least stays the same, it is obvious that it not only offers good programme to its visitors, but it also has a great marketing strategy.

In order to determine the marketing strategy which attracted the largest number of visitors, a questionnaire was used for data gathering. The survey was conducted in July 2013, during the 2013 EXIT festival. It lasted for four days and it was conducted at three different sites – Petrovaradin fortress, camping area near the University of Novi Sad and

⁹² <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/SHOWBIZ/Music/05/31/summer.music.festivals/index.html>, retrieved on 10 May 2014

⁹³ <http://www.euronews.com/2013/05/01/europes-biggest-summer-festivals/>, retrieved on 10 May 2014

⁹⁴ <http://www.exitfest.org/en/news/exit-wins-best-major-festival-european-festival-awards>, retrieved 10 May 2014

⁹⁵ <http://www.festivalawards.com/2013/11/05/ukfestivalawardsfinalists/>, retrieved 10 May 2014

⁹⁶ <http://exitfest.org/sr/content/zanimljivi-podaci-o-exitu>, retrieved 10 May 2014

⁹⁷ Zakić, L. et al. (2009), Interaction of foreign visitors of the EXIT music festival with domestic visitors and local population, *Geographica Panonica*, 13 (3), pp. 97-104

the city centre. The questionnaire was answered by 157 respondents – 88 foreign visitors and 69 domestic ones. The results were obtained on the basis of randomly selected sample, using the written survey questionnaire completed by the interviewees or by the interviewer after the given verbal responses from the respondents.

Considering the fact that foreign visitors make a large percentage of the EXIT visitors, the answer to the question “How to attract as many foreign visitors as possible” is of great importance. However, not only the foreign visitors are the ones that are welcome on the EXIT festival. Even though they are the ones who are the big spenders and are more important from the touristic point of view, EXIT would not be what it is without the domestic visitors as well. Therefore they also form part of the questionnaire conducted in a bit smaller percentage, but not at all less important.

The questionnaire can be seen in Appendix 1 while the table with all the results can be found in Appendix 2. A thorough analysis of the answers, as well as a discussion on why the questions were used will be presented in continuation.

6.3. The results of the research

The research started with some background questions about the respondents: their nationality, age, sex and level of education. As it was stated earlier, there were 69 respondents from Serbia which makes 44% of the participants, while 88 of them, that is, 66% were from abroad. They were asked to specify their country even though there were no generalizations and conclusions drawn according to the country the participants are from.

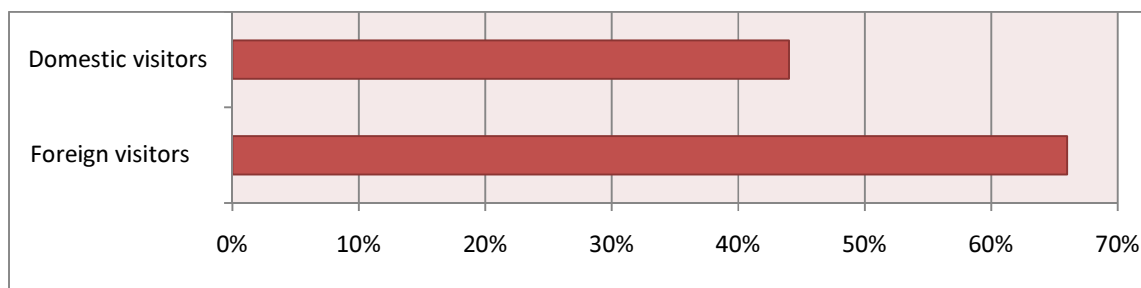


Chart 1: Percentage of foreign and domestic participants (Source: Author)

The 88 foreign respondents were from 7 different countries: the great majority was from the UK – as many as 43 of them or 48.9%; 16 of them were from the Netherlands (18.2%); 11 of them from Croatia (12.5%), 7 of them from Hungary and as many from Slovenia (8%); 3 of them from France (3.5%) and there was even one respondent from India (0.9%).

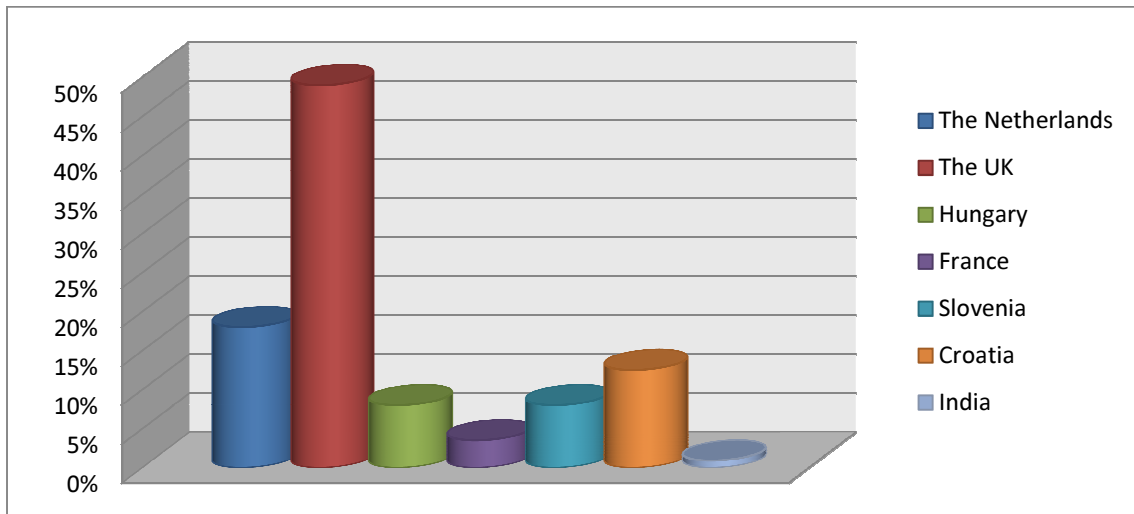


Chart 2: Foreign visitors according to the country they are from (Source: Author)

The second question was dedicated to the age of the participants. For the lower age limit of respondents we took the age group from 15 to 20 years. There is no upper age limit; the last age group is over 50 years old. Analysing age structure of visitors, there has been a conclusion that most of the respondents were in the age group of 21 to 30 years, 71 of them, that is, 45.3%. That group is followed by the age group from 31 to 40 years – 60 of the respondents (38.2%) belong to this group. 6 of the participants (3.8%) were aged from 15 to 20 years, and there were 13 of them (8.2%) in the 41 – 50 years age group as well as 7 of them (4.5%) in the over 50 years old group.

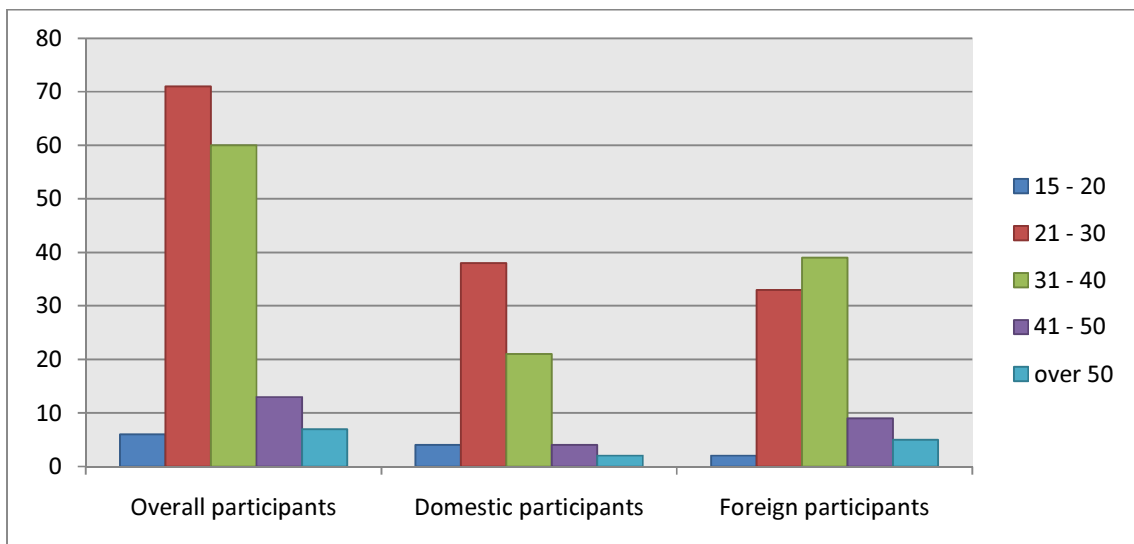


Chart 3: Age structure of the participants (Source: Author)

As far as the sex of the participants is concerned, 106 of the participants, that is, 67.5% were male and 51 of them (32.5%) were female. This is quite expected considering the fact that the majority of EXIT visitors are male. However, 39 out of 69 domestic participants were female which makes 57% of the domestic participants, while only 12 female from abroad took part in the research, making them only 14% of the foreign interviewees.

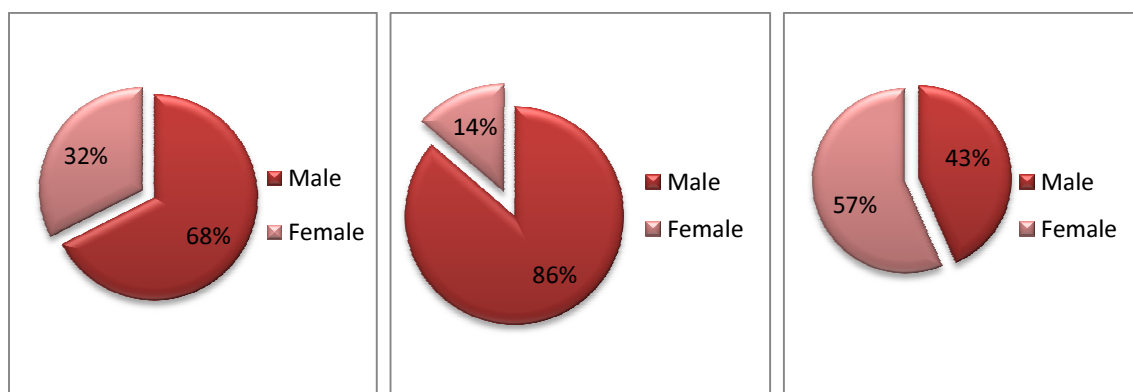


Chart 4: Gender of the participants: Overall participants / Foreign participants / Domestic participants (Source: Author)

The level of education of the participants brings a bit of a pleasant surprise: only 2 of the participants, that is, 1.3% of them have only elementary school education; 18 of them or 11.5% have high school education while as much as 137 of the participants, that is, 87.2% have a University degree. That shows that people interested in EXIT festival and type of programme it offers have high education.

The next question was about the number of days the participants were staying at the EXIT festival. Normally EXIT festival lasts for 4 days, but year 2013 was an exception - during that year, the festival lasted for 5 days. 41.4% of the participants were staying at the festival for the whole 5 days, 30.5% of them were there for 4 days, 11.5% were staying for 3 days, 7% of them for 2 days and 9.6% visited the festival for one night only. More information as far as individual answers of foreign and domestic participants are concerned can be found in the Figure 10.

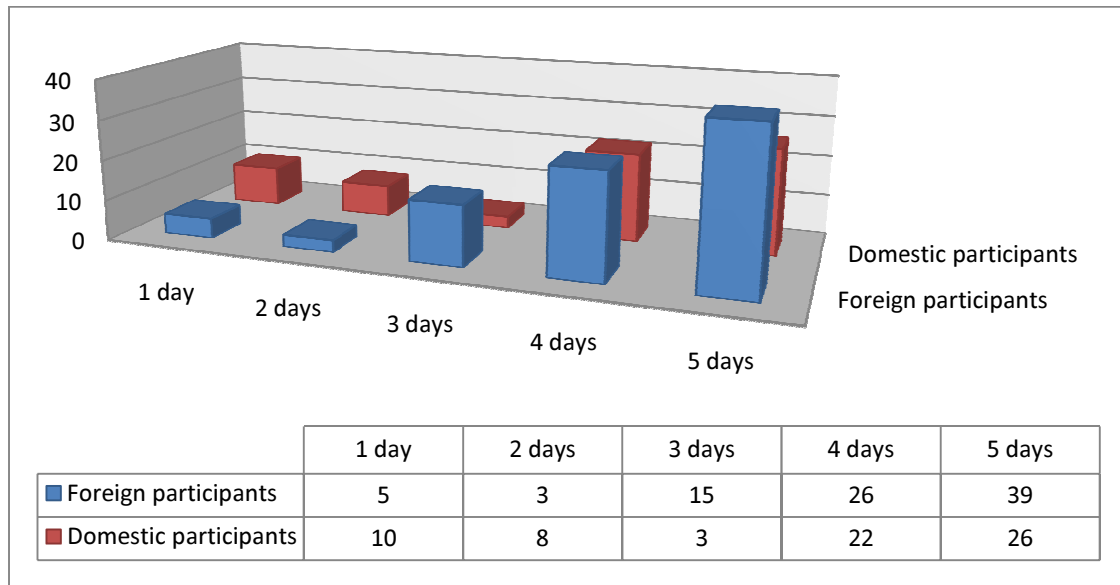


Chart 5: Number of days spending at EXIT festival (Source: Author)

The next two questions were about the past visits to EXIT festivals, as well as future intentions of doing it again. 2013 EXIT festival was the first time that 72.6% of our participants visited it. 27.4% had done it before; however, only 1.3% of them were foreign visitors, or putting it in numbers - only 2 of the foreign participants were visiting EXIT festival for the second time.

88.5% of the respondents answered that they would like to visit EXIT festival again. It is important to highlight that all of the domestic visitors answered “yes” to this question. In addition, the explanation of the 18 foreign visitors, that is, 11.5% of the participants who answered “no” to the question was the same: the reason was not dissatisfaction with the festival or failure to meet the expectations; it was the need to visit as many different festivals as possible, not visit the same one twice.

The purpose of the next questions was to determine the financial status of the participants, as well as to emphasize the importance of EXIT festival for the tourism of Novi Sad and Serbia. Therefore, there were two questions: What type of accommodation was chosen and how much money did they intend to spend during their visit of the festival. The majority of the participants – 77 of them, that is, 45.2% were staying in a rented apartment. That was the leading answer in both separate groups as well: 40.9% of foreign participants chose this answer, as well as 50.7% of the domestic ones. 33 participants, that is, 21% of them chose one of many hostels in Novi Sad, with 21 of them being domestic ones and 12 of them being foreign ones. In addition, 32 participants (20.4%) decided to be accommodated in the official camp of EXIT festival, with 11 of them being domestic ones and 21 of them being foreign ones. The most interesting part is that 10.8% of overall

participants, that is, 17 of them were staying at a hotel. However, only 2 of those 17 participants were from Serbia, showing the difference between financial status of the foreign and domestic participants. The rest of the participants – 0.6% of them chose the answer “other”.

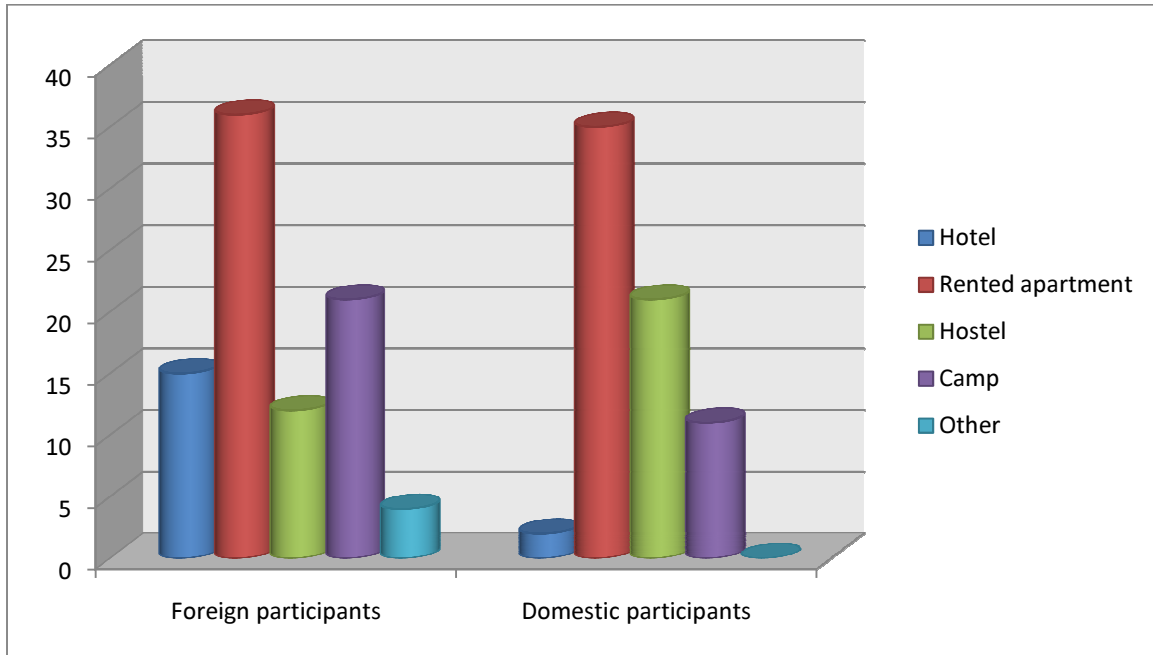


Chart 6: The accommodation type (Source: Author)

The analysis of the question how much money did the participants intend to spend during their visit is a great indicator of the different financial status of the two groups of participants. Not one foreign participant chose the answer “50 – 100 €”, not even the ones who were visiting EXIT for only one day. However, 26 of the domestic participants chose this answer, making them 16.6% of the overall participants and 37.7% as far as only the domestic ones are concerned. The same pattern can be seen in the other two answers offered: only 6 foreign visitors out of 88 or 6.8% of them chose the answer “100 – 200 €”, while on the other hand that was the leading answer of the domestic visitors – 35 out of 69 of them, that is, 50.7% chose this answer. The answer “more than 200 €” was chosen by as much as 82 foreign participants, that is, 93.2% of them, making this answer the leading one in this group of participants. Unfortunately, only 8 domestic participants, that is, 11.6% of them were lucky enough to be able to choose this answer.

Even though overall statistics for this question looks pretty good - 16.6% of the participants were planning to spend between 50 and 100 €, 26.1% of them were planning to spend between 100 and 200 €, while the majority of the participants, 57.3% of them, was planning to spend more than 200€ - emphasising the huge difference between the foreign and domestic participants' answers was seen as extremely important and was therefore

included in this paper as well. However, the impact of the abovementioned foreign spending on the economy of Novi Sad is obvious.

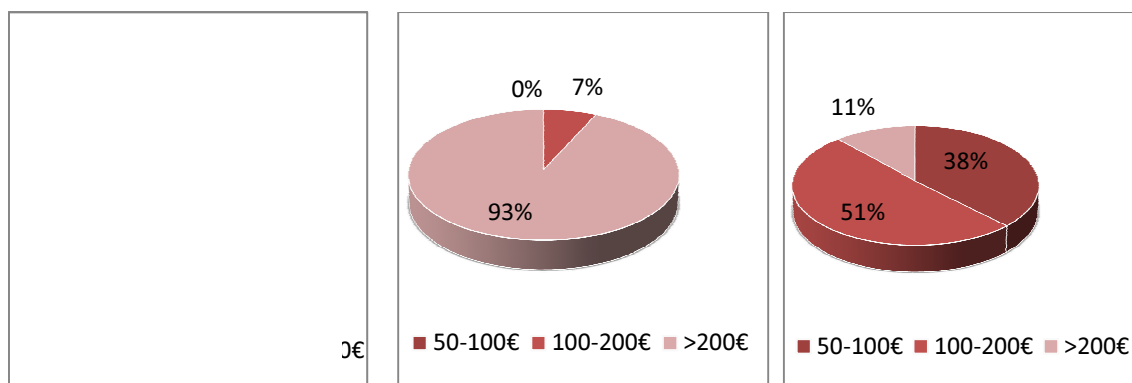


Chart 7: Intended spending: Overall participants / Foreign participants / Domestic participants (Source: Author)

The last two questions of the questionnaire are the most important ones for this paper, researching how exactly the visitors found out about EXIT festival. Considering the importance of the questions, the data will be researched in three separate sections: first the results for the domestic and foreign participants will be shown separately and then the overall data which will include all the participants will be processed.

When it comes to the way of finding out about EXIT festival, 13% of the domestic participants, that is, 9 of them chose the answer “recommendation” explaining that they first heard about the festival from a friend or acquaintance. 11 of them (16%) selected the “TV, radio” answer, while 3 of them (4%) chose the option “Newspapers, magazines or brochures”. The great majority of the participants - 46 of them, that is, 67% answered “Internet, social networks”.

The participants who chose that option had one additional question to answer – name the exact part of the Internet where they found out about the festival: was it the official EXIT festival website, a blog or a forum, or one of the social networks. When it comes to the domestic participants, the results are the following: 24% of the participants were informed on the official EXIT festival website, 13% first saw videos of the festival on YouTube and that way found out about it, 4% of them noticed that people were using the EXIT festival hashtag on Twitter, another 4% saw pictures of their friends visiting EXIT festival on Instagram, 18% found the information on Google and 37% of the participants found out about EXIT on Facebook. None of the participants chose the option “blog / forum”, nor the option “Google+”.

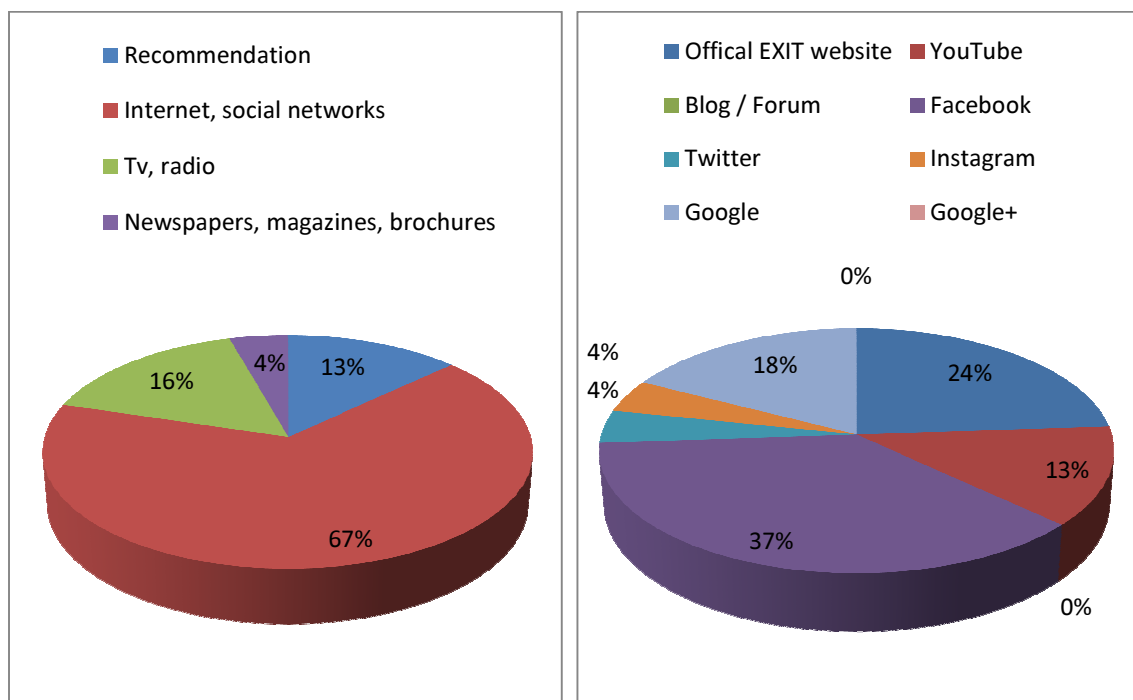


Chart 8: How did the domestic participants find out about EXIT festival (Source: Author)

When it comes to younger participants, answering to these two questions was rather difficult – most of them stated they knew about EXIT since they could remember. However, the data clearly shows that the leading source of information for the majority of the domestic participants was Facebook.

As far as foreign participants are concerned, slight differences can be noticed, especially considering the answer to the first question. 22 of the participants, that is, 25% of them replied that the festival was recommended to them while all the other participants, 66 of them, that is, 75% replied that they found out about the festival on the Internet. None of the foreign participants heard about the festival on TV or radio, or read about it in newspapers, magazines or brochures. When it comes to foreign visitors, it is obvious that not only that the Internet has taken the leading role in attracting them, but it has completely replaced the traditional media and pushed it out of the marketing arena.

More detailed research shows the following: 9 of the foreign participants (14%) found the information about the festival on the official EXIT website, 6 of them, that is, 9% saw a video from the festival on YouTube, only 2 of them, or in other words 3% of the foreign participants read about the festival in a blog; only 3 of the participants, that is 4% of them chose Google+ as the answer; 4 of them, that is, 6% remember seeing their friends' photos on Instagram, while interesting tweets with EXIT hashtag attracted 5 of the participants, or in other words 8% of them. Google was the main source of information for 15 of the foreign participants, that is, 23% of them, while the social network Facebook

takes the leading position again – 22 participants, or in other words 33% of the foreign visitors interviewed came to EXIT because of Facebook.

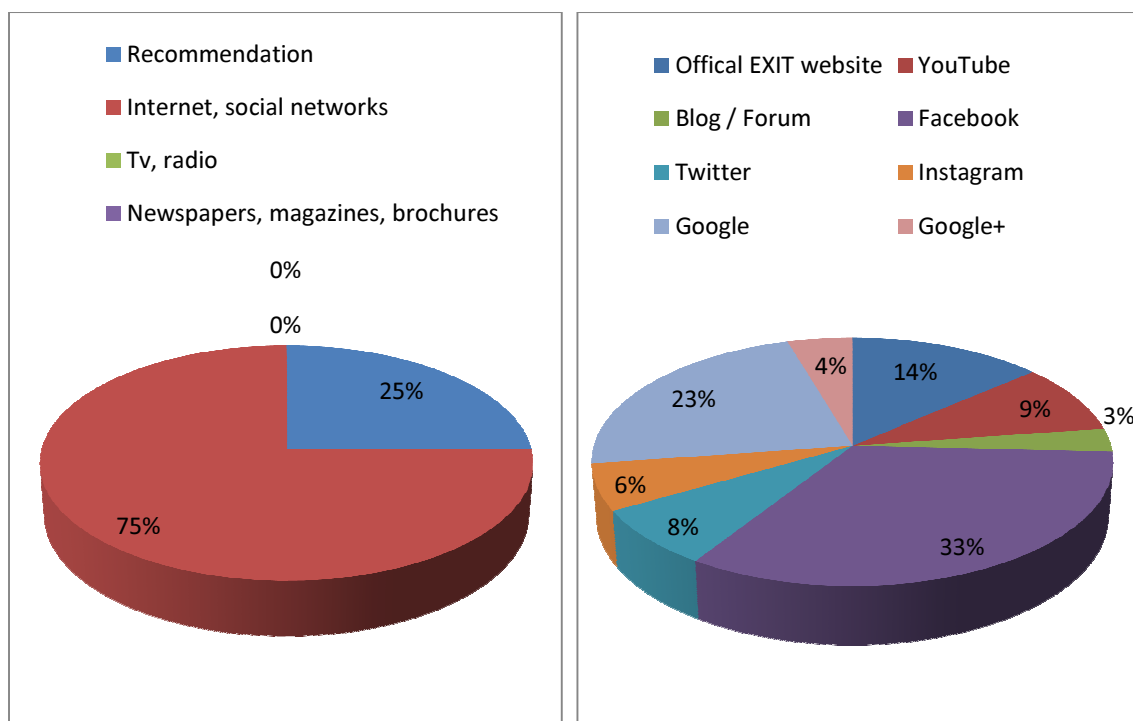


Chart 9: How did the foreign participants find out about EXIT festival (Source: Author)

Now that we have seen the data for domestic and foreign participants of the questionnaire separately, we can process the data for all the participants together. 21 of all the participants, that is, 20% of them answered that the festival was recommended to them. Only 11 of them (7%) selected the “TV, radio” answer, while 3 of them (1.9%) chose the option “Newspapers, magazines or brochures”. The great majority of the participants, as much as 112 of them, that is, 71.3% answered “Internet, social networks”.

As far as detailed research of the part of the Internet that convinced the participants that they should visit EXIT is concerned, the results are the following: 20 participants (17%) answered they found out about EXIT on its official website; 12 participants (10%) watched some EXIT festivals videos on YouTube, only 2 participants (1.8%) read about EXIT in a blog; as little as 3 participants (2.7%) heard about it on Google+; for 6 participants (5%), the first information came from Instagram, while for 7 of them (6%) it came from Twitter. 27 of all the participants, that is, 23% of them found out about EXIT festival on Google, while the option chosen by the majority of our participants is Facebook. 39 of them or in other words 34% selected Facebook as the place where they found out about EXIT festival for the first time.

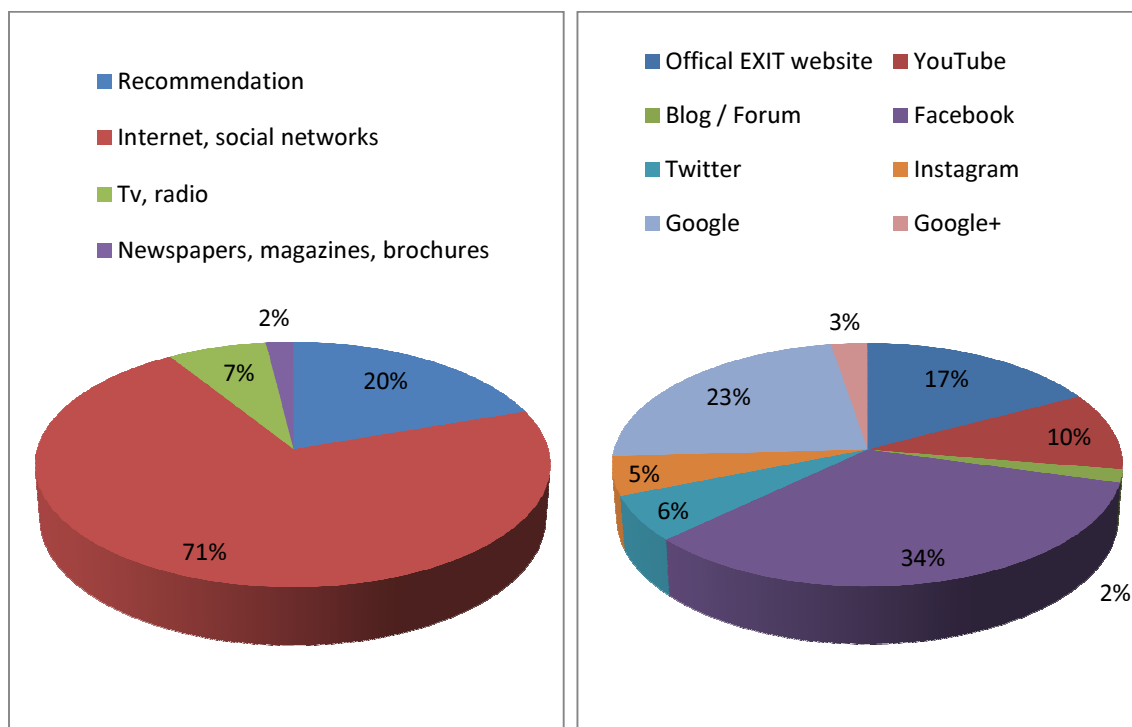


Chart 10: How did the overall participants find out about EXIT festival (Source: Author)

Looking at the data obtained from the research, we can draw some conclusions, as well as compare the two groups that formed our research. The most important conclusion is that there are actually not so many differences between the source of information of the domestic and the foreign participants. That is very important considering the fact that EXIT festival would surely like to keep attracting both domestic and foreign visitors. However, the difference lies in the use of traditional media marketing – while some of the domestic visitors picked TV, radio or newspapers as the means of information about the festival, none of the foreign ones did. Whether that means that foreign participants are more advanced than the domestic ones as far as information technologies are concerned and have therefore completely stopped turning to traditional media for information, or the reason for that lies in EXIT festival not advertising on foreign TV and radio stations, that is something that we unfortunately cannot determine and what calls for more detailed research.

We can determine that, as it was expected, the least of our participants used blogs or forums to find out about EXIT festival. In addition, some social networks such as Google+, Instagram and Twitter also brought quite a small percentage of the visitors looking at them separately. However, altogether 14% of the participants were drawn to EXIT festival because of some of these three social networks. Considering the fact that their use is free of charge, that is, only Twitter even offers the possibility of paid advertising, the math of ROI is clear.

On the other hand, YouTube proved itself as the social media that can provides quite satisfying results. This type of advertising would probably not generate that much success rate for some other product or company, but it is perfect for advertising events. Nothing could show the great atmosphere and good vibrations of an event like a video of it can do. Official EXIT festival website also brought quite the number of visitors. It does not come as a surprise considering the fact that the website contains the most of the information about the festival, as well as links to all the other social media.

The runner-up of the best source of information is Google. As it was stated before, 85% of internet users find websites through search engines and Google is the leading one. Therefore, assuming that the visitors did not search Google looking for EXIT festival itself, but for example searched for a good festival in Europe or the festival that suits their musical taste the best, a conclusion that EXIT festival website has good use of keywords and a lot of external sites linking back to it can be drawn. In addition, the festival uses AdWords, but unfortunately it is almost impossible to determine whether the paid ad is something that the visitor clicked on, or was it the part of the organic search, considering the fact that most of the people who use Google do not pay attention to that – they search for something and when they find it, they click on it, independently whether it was paid for or not.

And finally, the source that informed the most of the participants about EXIT festival is the social network giant Facebook. Exactly the third of the interviewees first heard about EXIT on Facebook, and the statistics stay pretty much the same when we look at the foreign and domestic participants separately. Like in the case of Google, it is almost impossible to determine whether the paid ad on Facebook is what attracted the visitors or was it the unpaid promotion on the official EXIT profile page or the information found on the wall of the participants' friends. That information calls for additional research. However, even without that information, taking into account the number of participants that chose Facebook as their answer, we can determine that marketing on Facebook is worth every penny invested, as well as that Facebook has the leading position as the source of information in modern day life.

CONCLUSIONS

The statement that tourism is an effective tool to achieve economic and social development of the destination has been well documented. Every destination that wants to improve its tourist attractiveness should make detailed plans for the development of tourism. These plans should not only incorporate, but focus on strategic planning of events if they want to realize the full potential of event tourism. The events that take place in a certain destination should be systematically planned and developed and should be established as tourist attractions, catalysts for further development, image builders and animators of the destination.

It is important that the events are planned and organized in a way that they differ from each other, considering the fact that well defined product or service that an event offers provides recognition in the market and advantage over the competition, which results in greater satisfaction of visitors and their loyalty – a necessity for repeating events.

The more recognizable events the destination has, the more it is attractive for the tourists. The key of their success lies in the support of the accommodation facilities of an appropriate standard, the high level of cooperation between tourist agencies, the availability of specific information about events and follow-up activities and most importantly, proper marketing activities.

Integrated marketing communications represent the new approach of promotion, and are the process of implementation of a permanent and continuous communication with current and potential customers. Their purpose is a long-term quality communication of the companies with the target market; therefore they must be systematically planned and their elements should be in accordance with each other. No combination of integrated marketing communications is applicable to all products or services and it is the uniqueness of a particular marketing strategy used that makes it successful.

Event marketing differs from the traditional marketing because the products of events contain intangible value. To successfully market an event, its unique qualities must be carefully designated and taken advantage of. Another reason for event marketing to be different from conventional types of marketing is the special nature of the cultural experience and the centrality of the customer in creating that experience. Under these circumstances, the focus of the marketing shifts from the organizers' needs to customers' needs, in order to enhance the satisfaction of the customers and their loyalty.

In addition, how special an event can be depends on its image. As a result of a strong image of event, the host destination enjoys the economic benefits that spread to other

sectors as well. A powerful branding of an event and co-branding of the event and the host destination can clearly distinguish a particular event from millions of other similar events.

The first two specific hypotheses of the paper are confirmed by theoretical description of the importance and benefits of the events and the well planned integrated marketing communications strategy used to organize them.

Overall, marketing is an endless effort. Today's success does not guarantee tomorrow's. Therefore, it is of extreme importance for every marketer to set a goal, continually review and evaluate the success and change the marketing strategy accordingly. Considering the fact that the event tourism industry has been affected by new technologies like all the other industries have been, the biggest and the most important adjustment that the event marketers should make is to adopt internet marketing communication as the primary one.

Internet has become an indispensable part of modern life. Even though the Internet as we know it today has been available only for about two decades, it has completely changed all our lives. The gadgets and possibilities it offers are countless and even though most of us lived in the era before the Internet, it is hard to remember how it was and we would never make it if we needed to live without it again. It has made our lives so much easier and has put the whole world at the top of our fingerprints.

Considering the influence it has had on our lives, it does not come as a surprise that it has become the base of every modern marketing strategy. Traditional media is losing the battle for the leading marketing platform, while internet marketing communication is becoming more and more advanced each and every day. The possibilities of marketing online are countless, from creating a website as the virtual office of every product that needs to be advertised, through search engine optimization in order to attract as many visitors as possible to the website, to all the different social networks available. And the greatest part is that it can be even completely free – the only investments necessary are the investment of marketer's time and creativity.

Taking into account its impact on the tourism in Serbia, EXIT music festival was chosen as the case study of this paper. In addition, its constant success clearly shows that the marketing strategy its organizers have selected is a good one. Therefore, a research was conducted on what was the main source of information about the festival for its visitors. The research was conducted on 157 visitors, 69 of them being from Serbia and 88 of them from abroad.

As it was expected, the main source of information about the festival was the Internet. Not only did it take the leading role and overcome the success of traditional media, but it has completely replaced them and pushed them out of the marketing arena.

Therefore, the general hypothesis of the paper has been confirmed – internet marketing communication is the most important part of every modern marketing strategy and has overcome the importance of the traditional media marketing.

Further research was conducted and it has been established that the part of the Internet which generates the most return on investment by attracting the largest number of visitors are social media platforms. As it was expected, the leading and the most important social network is Facebook. The other social networks also attract considerable amount of visitors. However, all of them combined generate less response than Facebook by itself, therefore confirming the other two specific hypotheses of the paper as well.

This is only the beginning of the internet marketing communication. During the research it was established that most of the social media platforms were announcing a lot of new services they will offer to the marketers, proving that the internet marketing possibilities are ever changing and constantly developing. It is not easy to keep up with the constant changes and change the marketing strategy accordingly. However, when done right, success is guaranteed. One thing is certain – internet has overtaken the leading position as the most important medium in modern life and it surely will not lose that title for years to come.

APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Country you are from:

2. Gender:

- Male
- Female

3. Age:

- 15-20
- 21-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- Over 50

4. Level of education:

- Elementary school
- High school
- University

5. Number of days spending at EXIT festival:

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

6. Is this the first time you are visiting EXIT festival?

- Yes
- No

7. Would you like to visit EXIT festival again?

- Yes
- No

8. Type of accommodation:

- Hotel
- Hostel
- Camp
- Rented apartment
- Other

9. How much money do you intend to spend during your visit to EXIT festival?

- 50 – 100 €
- 100 – 200 €
- More than 200 €

10. How did you find out about EXIT festival?

- Recommendation
- Internet, social networks
- TV, radio
- Newspapers, magazines, brochures

11. If the answer to the previous question is 'Internet, social networks', please choose one of the following options:

- Official EXIT festival website
- YouTube
- Blog
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- Google
- Google +
- Other _____

APPENDIX II

Results of the questionnaire:

1. Country you are from:

The Netherlands	16
The UK	43
France	3
Hungary	7
Slovenia	7
Croatia	11
India	1

2. Gender:

	Foreign	Domestic
Male	76	30
Female	12	39

3. Age:

	Foreign	Domestic
15 – 20	2	4
21 – 30	33	38
31 – 40	39	21
41 – 50	9	4
Over 50	5	2

4. Level of education:

	Foreign	Domestic
Elementary school	0	2
High School	11	7
University	77	60

5. Number of days spending at EXIT festival:

	Foreign	Domestic
1 day	5	10
2 days	3	8
3 days	15	3
4 days	26	22
5 days	39	26

6. Is this the first time you are visiting EXIT festival?

	Foreign	Domestic
Yes	86	2
No	2	41

7. Would you like to visit EXIT festival again?

	Foreign	Domestic
Yes	70	69
No	18	0

8. Type of accommodation:

	Foreign	Domestic
Hotel	15	2
Rented apartment	36	35
Hostel	12	21
Camp	21	11
Other	4	0

9. How much money do you intend to spend during your visit to EXIT festival?

	Foreign	Domestic
50 – 100 €	0	26
100 – 200 €	6	35
More than 200 €	82	8

10. How did you find out about EXIT festival?

	Foreign	Domestic
Recommendation	22	9
Internet, social networks	66	46
TV, radio	0	11
Newspapers, magazines, brochures	0	3

11. If the answer to the previous question is 'Internet, social networks', please choose one of the following options:

	Foreign	Domestic
Official EXIT website	9	11
YouTube	6	6
Blog / Forum	2	0
Facebook	22	1
Twitter	5	2
Instagram	4	2
Google	15	8
Google+	3	0

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