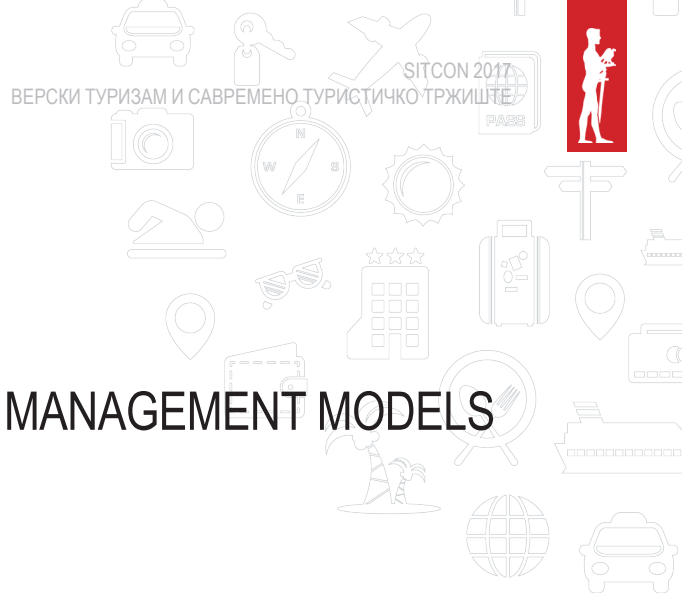




THE APPLICATION OF DESTINATION MANAGEMENT MODELS FOR RELIGIOUS DESTINATIONS

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Abstract:

Religious destinations have been developing over the last two decades to meet the increasing demand of religious tourists. Religion plays a major part in influencing individuals to visit religious sites. The visitation patterns among individuals depend entirely on the strength of one's religious beliefs. Religious tourism has played a central role in attracting millions of pilgrims to travel to religious sites with unique spiritual significance. The paper explores the understanding and motivation of visitation patterns of religious tourists to sacred sites.

Religious tourism and pilgrimage nowadays form a specific part of the global tourism industry, either as a specific sector, religious tourism and pilgrimage, or as a part of the cultural tourism. Religious tourism and pilgrimage are the fastest growing sectors within the tourism industry. The religious sites have been globalised into commercialisation and economic gain for local and international businesses.

The paper aims to explore the way in which the religious and spiritual values of destinations can be used for tourism purposes to move towards the maximisation of income from the products and services offered at religious sites without diminishing or destroying core values of the religious sites. The paper also examines the implications of managing visitor strategies in the UK and other religious destinations worldwide on how the management of these sites may impact secularism in the religious tourism.

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