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IMPROVEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOURISM OF SERBIA

(Modalități de îmbunătățire a dezvoltării turismului în Serbia)

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Abstract

Serbia, without doubt, has qualitative and diverse base to develop tourism. Natural attractions as well as attained level of lodging and other capacities point out that numerous types of tourism could be developed, especially if one takes into account landscape diversity as well as natural potentials of Serbia.

Previous development of tourism affirms its numerous effects which, in significant manner, have been embedded in economic and social development of Serbia.

In that connection, the aim of this work is to point out the necessity of stimulating tourism in Serbia, which would form necessary assumptions for its dynamic role in the development of economy of Serbia.

Keywords:

- Tourism;
- Marketing strategy;
- Goals;
- Development.

Rezumat

Fără îndoială, Serbia are o bază diversă și de calitate pentru dezvoltarea turismului. Atracțiile naturale cât și nivelul obținut de cazare și alte facilități evidențiază faptul că numeroase forme de turism pot fi dezvoltate, în special dacă luăm în considerare diversitatea peisajelor și potențialul natural al Serbiei.

Dezvoltarea anterioară a turismului arată efectele sale numeroase care, într-o măsură semnificativă, au fost încadrate în dezvoltarea economică și socială a Serbiei.

În legătură cu acestea, scopul acestei lucrări este acela de a evidenția necesitatea stimulării turismului în Serbia, care ar forma prezumpțiile necesare pentru rolul său dinamic în dezvoltarea economiei Serbiei.

Cuvinte cheie:

- Turism;
- Strategie de marketing;
- Scopuri;
- Dezvoltare.

Introduction

The evaluation of expected effects of future development of tourism in Serbia and its influence on the whole economy and regional development must be begun from its qualitative basis. It encompasses analyzed, solid resources, positive tendencies in international and domestic tourist environment, further development of these segments in the field of foreign tourism, which are distinguished by quality in terms of demand for suitable contents and in terms of readiness for needed expenses as well as other elements.

However, intensification of development means large positive changes in the domestic economic environment of Serbia and its surroundings. Only with significant changes which would overcome existing barriers, Serbia could increase its foreign and domestic tourist traffic, foreign exchange income as well as foreign tourist consumption. Dynamic role of tourism in the economic development of Serbia, as well as its known multiplying effects would generate increased levels of basic and supplementary employment, especially in the underdeveloped areas. This would contribute to increase in tourist and complementary activities and widen markets (including multiplying effects of spill over of consumption from abroad) for the investment of domestic products and services in all sectors.

1. Aims and directions in the strategic development of tourism in Serbia

Taking into account that Serbia has a lot of qualitative resources for the development of tourist economy, aims and directions of the strategic development of tourism in Serbia could be defined as following (1):

- Intensification of overall development through a more complete use of existing capacities;
- Much faster and significant appearance of Serbia, as tourist destination, on international market;
- Creating conditions for further development of domestic tourism;
- Advancement of overall organization in its function of efficient management tourist development;
- Build up of such tourist environment which would stimulate investment as well as business dealings in the following areas: privatization and entrepreneurship;

1.1. Intensification in development of existing demands

Development of new demand in tourism, understood as market justified and selective, is necessary in years to come. However, due to various factors, tourist basis for a certain period of time must have intensification and completion of demand in those regions and places, which are already tourist renowned. Beside this, organizational changes in tourist dealings may contribute to a qualitative offer. Intensification of development of tourist offer has to be done in several directions:

- Greater orientation in building of apartments, tourist places and recreational contents;
- Opening of retail and craftsman shops and specialized restaurants;
- Innovation in preparation technology and technique of offering services (for example Swedish table),
- Standardization and computerization of business dealings in tourist places;

- Organizational and business connection of tourism, catering, trade, agriculture, communication, fishery and other activities which constitute tourist offer.

Intensification of development of existing demand, in terms of aims and directions of strategic development of tourism in Serbia, is possible according to regional allocation of tourist lodging capacities in Serbia. For the time being, advantage in the basic offer have hotel lodgings while in supplementary activities, advantage have beds in private rooms. Under total tourist offer one can assume:

- Offer in receptive places (natural and anthropogenic values of tourist areas, material base of a tourist place, etc);
- Offer in imitative places.

1.2. Appearance on international tourist market and development of domestic tourism

It is known that tourist product of Serbia, with its structure and quality, has always lagged behind similar products which are, on international market, offered by developed European tourist destinations. Long-term economic crisis and isolation caused by sanctions have widened the gap so that this area has been put on margins of economic tourist trends.

In order to define Serbian appearance on international tourist market, following has to be taken into account:

- Availability of information about all elements which make up resources or potentials of Serbia for tourist development;
- Clearly defined value of these potentials;

- Availability of information about happenings in external environment and market milieu especially;

- Prediction of trends and tendencies in environment.

Tourist potentials of Serbia, on their own, ascertain availabilities which need to be exploited (for example, natural, anthropogenic, cultural, historical, communication conditions), and changes in behavior of tourist demand (for example demand for preserved nature, beauty of cultural content), determine possible performance chances. When considering appearance of Serbia on international market, one has to take into account following aspects:

- Creation of organizational conditions (on macro and micro level) from which a clear and consistent mission can appear;

- Definition of actual market, demands and segments, as well as potential demands, needs and tourist requests (implementation of differentiating and concentrated marketing);

- Implementation of activities which need to be market orientated, with management as tool for growth and development;

- Need to preserve tourist and social environment (so called "light" tourism);

Serbia, as tourist destination, on international tourist market, must make efforts to realize economic and social advantages from 'export' of relevant tourist products. In defining goals of development of international tourism it is necessary to bring into accord chances from foreign surroundings with strong domestic points (advantages), and avoid situation which are marked as threats to

market as well as eliminate domestic weak points (disadvantages).

One has to keep in mind that other numerous activities could contribute to a successful development of tourism in Serbia, on the long run, especially from the standpoint of its position and affirmation in international scope, such as:

- Creation of adequate programs which would be explored for targeted foreign and domestic market and to whom would be directed adequate business and tourist policies (with organized representation in other countries);

- Activate continued exploration of markets at all levels, in order to secure efficient representation domestically and abroad;

- Creation of uniform tourist information system of Serbia, on a projected basis, as a rapid condition for presentation, promotion and perspective offer of tourist product of Serbia;

- Realization of international and regional cooperation, as well as cooperation with neighboring states.

1.3. Development of tourist economy and wholesome offer in function of economic recovery of Serbia

For further development of tourist economy of Serbia the primary goal is adjustment of domestic tourist offer to foreign demand. It is necessary to create conditions for intensive development, under which we understand qualitative integral tourist product (with adequate development of all components of “total” product), as well as continuous enlargement (extensive development) of lodging capacities and its exemplary offer. Furthermore, it is necessary to secure high quality of all components of

tourist product, so that one unit of lodging (bed) can be considered as a complex unit of capacity offer.

Existing basic elements of offer need to be upgraded with the following components:

- Advancement of quality of tourist and communal infrastructure (water supply, development of PTT services, road network, park and other open space and other).

- Widening of network of small catering facilities (especially those which offer domestic specialties);

- Securing of rich assortment and introduction of modern forms of retail trade (by introduction of special work time; securing of qualitative services and other).

In terms of economic recovery of Serbia, one has to view interconnection between development of tourism, communication and trade (for a long period of time chances are being lost for a larger placement of products of leather, textile, ready-made clothing, crystal, clay, sport equipment, food products, beverages etc) as can be compared with concrete foreign destinations.

Beside this, domestic tourist development needs:

- Modernizing conditions for performing craftsmanship services;

- Creating comprehensive possibilities for practicing culture, entertainment, sport activities, excursions and other (always keeping in mind that tourism and boredom are confronting terms);

- Securing of diverse “instant-programs” of learning foreign languages, dances, folklore, sport skills, culinary art and other;

- Creating favorable hygienic conditions in facilities, in tourist places, along highways;

- Qualitative landscape modeling of locality and preventing whatever devastations;

For the development of tourist economy and its contribution to the economic recovery of Serbia it is necessary to create conditions for tourism dealings to be efficient. Main preconditions for development of tourist economy are:

a) Consistent fiscal policy

Based on stable and stimulative basis, which should need to appreciate work intensive character of tourist activity as well as other conditions and business specifics of tourism;

b) Tourism needs a status of exporter and adequate incentives:

- On the level of export and import: increase in the level of charges charged by foreign currency exchange offices, liberalization of import of catering equipment, custom and tax benefits for import of rent-a-car vehicles, stimulating payment for sold products and services to foreign tourists and other;

- Adequate means of securing resources for the preparation of tourist season (lack of working capital due to the rhythm of tourist season);

- Exporter status would secure one of the main basis for advancement of quality of services in tourism (with the regulation of intake of foreign capital, visa regime, highway tolls, other);

c) Financial credit for the advancement of exports

d) Stock capital

e) Foreign capital

f) Internationalization of dealings in trade and tourism

1. 4. Priority types of tourism in the perspective of development

Development of tourist economy of Serbia, in terms of defined goals of development, demand determination of priority types of tourism. Taking this into account it is possible to select the following, most important, types of tourism:

- (1) Big city tourism (2)
- (2) Mountain tourism
- (3) Transit tourism
- (4) Spa tourism
- (5) Tourism along Danube river
- (6) Tourism based on special

interests

Beside this, it is necessary to know that Serbia is not a suitable destination for development of massive tourism, especially not on an international market. However, its tourist values bring it into high correlation with growing trend of individualization and international sophistication, as well as domestic tourist demand. From that stems certain demands when formulating acceptable tourist product and its advancement, and those may include following positions:

- It is necessary to precisely define target markets and target segments;

- Faster positioning (and repositioning) of a known tourist product of Serbia;

- Within market (domestic and foreign) it is necessary to define target segments (for example congress participants, business travelers, transit passengers, nautical personal, hunters and others);

- Large number of smaller segments and individualization which influences faster adjustment to turbulent tourist demands (as in room and board facilities so in outside facilities);

- Sale and promotion must be made more directly with constant monitoring of market happenings.

1. 5. Selective determination of target segments and target markets

Strategic basis for development of Serbia as tourist destination must be based on selective determination of target markets and target segments in tourism of Serbia. They can be disaggregated on three types of markets:

(1) Markets which can be rapidly entered by tourist product of Serbia, and from which it is possible to secure initial foreign currency inflow (former Yugoslav republics, Russian federation, Greece, Ukraine, Czech, Slovakia, Israel)

(2) Perspective markets which, in short time, could generate significant foreign currency income (with a major effort in positioning and repositioning, with adequate adjustment). These are: Germany, France, UK, Italy, Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, Austria and other)

(3) Potential markets, over a long period of time, which require adjustment (for example USA, Canada, Japan, China and other).

These priority market segments could be: participants to various congresses, sport, cultural and other manifestations; those that prefer utilization of mountain centers (in winter and summer season); those that prefer spa centers; hunters, fishermen, transit passengers, youth segment, retirees and others. Also, for some of this segment part time travel could be developed i.e. package arrangements for organized groups of consumers.

2. Adjustment of economic and other policy

The main areas of adjustment of economic and other policy, within the context of activity for the realization of long term goals of development of tourism are:

- Improvement of legal regulations,
- Induction of investment (foreign and domestic),
- Creation of integral programs of development of tourism,
- Joint foreign investment.

Thus, it is necessary to form a complete, consistent and selective system of measures which would, on long term basis, stabilize and induce development of tourism. These measures cannot be partial and must be changed often, but must be directed in the direction of continental tourism in all its aspects.

However, for the realization of given growth rate in tourism, beside long-term measures and changes of systematic laws, also are needed short-term measures of economic policy:

- Efficient functioning of legal state, with changed legislations and its adjustment to EU regulations (with independent judiciary and efficient police),
- State financing from real sources, with a possibility of financing of deficit up to 5%, but only through valuable papers, sold on financial markets;
- Lowering of taxes and contributions, so that they can be stimulative to gradual scaling down of gray economy and its transformation into legal one,
- Strengthening of financial discipline, at the same time honoring all instruments of payments and implementation of fiscal obligations,

- Activation of all inspection services and financial police (with rigorous control of corruption and bribes),

- Persistent implementation of anti-monopoly laws and control of monopoly behavior;

- Creation of social programs as well as conditions for new jobs in economy of small enterprises,

- Creation of market for trade in valuable papers (government bonds, cashier bills, commercial bills, foreign currency bonds and shares stemming from privatization).

Conclusion

Success of tourist product of Serbia, on international and domestic market will be in great measure under the influence of necessary changes in orientation of tourist development. Today there is a need to revitalize and augment these products, in order to

adjust them to new and contemporary market trends and tendencies. These must be done in a largely changed environment (demographic, economic, natural, technological, political, legal, social-cultural and other).

However, general principles for participation of Serbia in contemporary tourist trends needs to be focused on target markets and segments.

Therefore, it is necessary to develop selective products (at the level of place, region and zones) and to direct them towards upgrading of room and breakfast concept and other service sectors, in the overall tourist presentation of Serbia.

Those ones which are charged with carrying out business and tourist policy and creation of consistent strategy of tourist development, must start from strategic adjustment of tourist economy of Serbia to the overall market changes.

Endnotes:

(1) Adapted according to Strategy of development of tourism of Serbia, Beograd, 1999

(2) Business reasons and other types of visits to Beograd, Novi Sad, Nis and other major cities in Serbia participated with over 70% in the total number of foreign tourist visits.

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