

THE EFFECT OF CO-MARKETING PROJECTS ON TOURISM BUSINESSES ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE LIVING ON THE EDGE PROJECT OF NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC IN SOUTH ESTONIA

The co-operation and co-marketing projects increase competitiveness of a tourism destination and the collaboration between businesses and development organizations [4]. Participating in co-marketing projects is profitable for business owners because it diminishes marketing costs and risks [2, 4]. The aim of the National Geographic (hereinafter NG) yellow frame project in South Estonia is to strengthen the identity of the region, to bring fame and visitors to the area and to introduce South Estonia to both domestic and foreign tourists [1].

The aim of this paper is to study the impact of participating in NG Living on the Edge project and make suggestions to development and marketing organizations (hereinafter DMO) and business owners in South Estonia in order to increase the effect of the co-marketing project. The author posed two research questions:

- 1) how much has the NG Living on the Edge project increased the number of visitors in South-Estonian businesses?
- 2) according to business owners, to what extent has the NG Living on the Edge project fulfilled its goals?

The quantitative study was conducted in the form of a survey. The questions were divided into categories accordingly: the role of co-operation of business owners when developing tourism destinations [5]; assessment of conducted marketing activities and methods [3]; assessment of the influence of co-marketing projects [2].

The population of the study consisted of tourism business owners who were involved with the marketing activities of the Living on the Edge project. Based on the route pamphlets a sample was compiled of entrepreneurs active in the tourism market. The survey was conducted using the online tool Limesurvey from 17.03–05.04.2016 among 247 South-Estonian tourism business owners. There were 61 respondents. The method of data analysis applied to this survey was analytical statistical analysis.

The respondents were from all six counties of South Estonia and more than a half of the respondents considered the number of visitors in the region to have increased. 40 business owners claimed that the number of domestic tourists had increased during 2013–2015 after the implementation of the project. Fewer respondents thought that the number of visitors had not increased during this period. The respondents mostly emphasized the necessity of domestic tourist-orientated marketing activities and did not think that all possible marketing methods had been used.

The author found that in order to increase the effectiveness of the co-marketing project, the DMO should promote the project on a larger scale (including television and radio advertising) and encourage business owners to sell the coupon books and route pamphlets of the project and share information about the collaboration. The study revealed that one county had little interest in the project and activities (being informed and sharing information) and the author suggested installing additional yellow frames at nature sites in this county. The author recommended redesigning the homepage of the project by adding a search engine for finding businesses and their services, and design and install information boards for the frames which provided additional information about the project as well as the businesses in the area.

References

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А.В. Маевская

БГЭУ (Минск)

Научный руководитель Л.С. Шуплякова

ONLINE SHOPPING AS THE FORM OF E-COMMERCE

Today the Internet is the essential prerequisite for the existence of E-commerce. Electronic commerce or E-commerce has been defined as the ability to perform transactions involving the exchange of goods or services between two or more parties using electronic tools and technique. The explosion of E-commerce has created new phenomena in our lifestyle especially in shopping activities.

“E-commerce is the new, profitable way to conduct business which goes beyond the simple movement of information and expands electronic transactions from point-of-sale requirements, determination and production scheduling, right through to invoicing, payment and receipt. E-commerce uses key standards and technologies including Electronic Data Interchange (EDI), Technical Data Interchange (TDI), Hypertext Mark-up Language (HTML), and Extensible Mark-up Language (XML)” [2].