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USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS PURPOSES IN TOURISM

Abstract:

Rapid changes in communication technologies led to important changes in methods and instruments of public relations activities. Institutional communication activities which were carried out by means of web pages of internet media have started gaining importance in the area of social media upon the rise of this phenomenon. Public relations activities such as crisis management, corporate image, and organizational identity, promotion, informing and communicating have been started to be used efficiently in the area of social media. Social media not only changed the areas of communication but also changed the content of messages and the media settings of message senders and receivers. Additionally social media introduced the concepts such as "user generated content" and "customer generated media" and gathered its position in commercial planning by this feature. Social media became an indispensable component of tourism marketing. Traditional communication media have changed significantly upon the introduction and development of social media. Communicating with customers became an easy and low cost process. Creating trademark consciousness, ingathering trademark related groups, determining the target market and the attributes of target market became an easier process by means of social media instruments. It might be said that social media is perceived as a very efficient instrument regarding to the touristic product preferences of people. It provides more reliable information which is produced by the experienced and informed people directly related to the subjects such as tourism agency, destination, accommodation etc. and it provides such information by changing the information gathering methods of users. The rise of social media usage in tourism industry might be associated to the travel related advices made by social media users directly and to the efficient operation of mouth to mouth communication. Use of social media in tourism industry for the purposes of public relations is probed from various perspectives and some applications are to be presented in this study.

Keywords:

Tourism, social media, public relations.

JEL Classification: M31