

USERS' EVALUATION OF TOURISM SITES

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Tourism is adapted field of information technologies since the first tourist product is the product that requires more and involve many risks

Tourist behaviour is considered as one of the reasons that led to the development and spread theory usability sites. The paper set out the title track is a first of a comparative radiography related to the ratio between the degree of user satisfaction and technologies used in a tourist site, in particular, tourist portal, in general In this first study have undergone some review sites on the tourism market in Romania online.

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1. Introduction

Because of the continuous increase in the number of the Internet users, as well as because of the increase in the value of the transactions made online, the electronic businesses are present today in various fields of activity and divided into various categories, of which, the most important are: E-auctioning, E-banking; E-commerce (one category is e-Tourism), E-directories; E-engineering E-gambling E-learning, E-mailing, E-marketing; E-supply; E-trading (e-brokering) E-service,; e-procurement, e-leasing, e-government, e-working, e-health.

Paraphrasing [15], we may say that the introduction of "e" in tourism "is like a conceptual and instrumental revolution. As any revolution, it is characterized by a strong discrepancy between promise and hope, between plan and achievement, between theoretical and real situations".

Tourism is known as the largest industry and because the trip is simple to match the expectations of tourists with different range and variety of options provided by millions of tourism providers.

Because millions of tourists travel each day, communications accurate, current and relevant information are essential for effective operations in the tourism industry. [17].

One can appreciate that the exchange of information is very important in every stage of the cycle of the product sales touristy. Information must be able to move quickly and securely between clients, brokers and suppliers of each travel involved in meeting customer needs.[17]

Passengers can receive information from a variety of sources. In recent years more and more used for information and to "purchase" various sites of tourism business.

We can say that a user who uses the site for a reservation is an "evolving consumer needs, tastes, preferences and predispositions marked by a pronounced dynamism" [7].

Because globalization increases competition. Companies need to encourage tourism for the consumer and create a tourist product on the Internet to buy and use the same distribution channel.

So, tourist behaviour's and tourist need's are considered as one of the reasons that led to the development and spread theory usability sites. The paper set out the title track is a first of a comparative radiography related to the ratio between the degree of user satisfaction and technologies used in a tourist site, in particular, tourist portal, in general.

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2. Related Work

The testing of the usability offers the chance of a clear image of the visitors' behaviour on a website and of correcting the possible infrastructure errors in order to obtain a maximum profit for each visit.

The specialists say that term itself is a usability lesson. As in the case of other concepts of data processing, as it comes from the English term "usability", there are disputes related to its translation. There are authors who recognize it in the term "uzabilitate", others in the term "usabilitate" and other translate it with "accessibility".

A short definition recognises by usability the efficiency of and ease with which people may use an Internet page, to the users' satisfaction. [16]

A broader definition accepts that usability is the efficiency of and ease with which people may use a webpage or an electronic interface (sometimes, the purpose for which the webpage is accessed is different from the purpose for which it has been created) – definition taken from Wikipedia and processed. [3]

3. Work methodology and some results

We have used 45 websites of tourism, from Romania, according to the criteria mentioned in [11]. These criteria have been divided into three categories:

A. - standard criteria

Navigability

- ease in the user authentication;
- visibility of the menus and ease in the access of menu items;
- identification of the positions in the site and access of each page, irrespective of the position.

Design

- first page – visibility of the authentication area;
- layout – colours;
- methods to catch the attention;

Information

- number of information levels;
- support area;
- contact data.

B Personalized criteria

- ease in the achievement of a transfer / payment;
- joining of security and anti-fishing elements, being easy to use;
- ease in the access of the “demo accounts” and other helping elements for the user;
- contact data in the case of loss / theft the authentication data;
- transparency of costs covered by the client.

C Criteria for HOME PAGE

- identity and mission of the organization;
- logical and hierarchical access to the information;
- possibility to search the information;
- “teasing” elements;
- special offers, novelties;
- shortcuts to the most visited areas of a site;
- users’ registration module.

Of the sites of our study we mention following (18): www.iloveromania.ro, www.promoturism.ro, www.veltravel.ro, www.calibratravel.ro, www.kartagotours.ro, www.pantravel.ro, www.eximtur.ro, www.tunisiana-travel.ro, www.atlassib.ro, www.normandiatransport.com, www.filadelfia-group.ro, www.blueair-web.com, www.infoturism.ro, www.marshal.ro, www.paralela45.ro, www.aerotravel.ro, www.perfect-tour.ro, www.christiantour.ro.

Ten persons on all websites have made the analysis. After the centralization of the individual observations, we have obtained the following results:

Services offered by these websites we can summarize:

- counselling related to holiday plans;
- reservation of hotel rooms or boarding houses in Romania;
- reservation of hotel rooms or boarding houses abroad;
- tourism packages that include the charter air transportation or bus transportation to Antalya, Kusadasi, Istanbul, Hurgada, Sharm el Sheick, Barcelona (for Barcelona, Costa Brava and Costa Dorada), Tenerife, Ibiza, Corfu, Crete, Salonic (for Paralia-Katerini and Halkidiki), etc.;
- tourism packages without transportation – hotel rooms and meals, visa, trips, medical insurances;
- special offers related to certain events as Christmas, New Year, Easter, sports competitions, folkloric festivals, etc.;
- tourist circuits abroad, both by plane and by bus;
- plane tickets for any destination with traditional companies, with low cost companies (cheap tickets) and also charters.

Other services:

- organization of conferences, symposia, team-buildings, special meetings, company party;
- organization of training camps or recovery holidays for sports teams;
- organization of personal events, as weddings, baptisms, anniversaries, name days parties, family parties.

Standard criterion:

Criterion	
Navigability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - horizontal menu, for the ease in the navigation by accessing a destination; they maybe arranged on the whole page; references to a new page with more details only for the selected destination (service) or - vertical menu, which includes all the destinations (services) and the horizontal menu, with general – informative character - with / without authentication area - with / without site map or map for destinations.
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - on some websites there are predominant foundation colours (as white and blue, yellow and pale orange, etc.) – there are no two websites of the analysed ones that have the same foundation colour; of the colour analysis we may say that some transmit the atmosphere that persists in the destination countries. - we may say that other sites are “without colour”, as there is no dominant colour, the foundation is formed of images.
Informational content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - organization from two up to nine informational levels (services / categories / subcategories).

Home Page Criterion

Criteria	
Identity and mission of the organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is specified very clearly for all websites.
Logical access to information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - presentation of the website purpose, contact data, authentication area, support area for users, possible search area and even shortcuts for the most accessed information (a kind of top).
Users’ registration module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - creation of an account for the completion of certain compulsory fields, respectively optional fields, or introduction of the e-mail address for subscription to the newsletter; - it needs the creation of an account only in the case of concrete service requirement (tourist destination, ticket reservation)
“Teasing” elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - it does not present any teasing element at the moment of analysis
Special offers, novelties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the menus present columns as “special offers” or “discounts of X% for Easter (New Year)”; - some do not stand out among the other columns, as they have the same colours and size; - they stand out by being placed on the page and capturing the attention by animations and colours.

4. Conclusions

As we are aware of the limits of this article (the number of persons who have tested the websites, the test used), we think that it is needed to extend the study by using the split a/b tests, proposed by [14].

The A/B split-testing is an advanced marketing principle; more exactly the webmasters use it to test various versions of a webpage or website, to determine which of them would be sold better, which colours would lead to a better promotion of the site from the user’s point of view.

The success of a website is connected to the observance of the usability criteria – navigability, design, informational content.

The purpose of an on-line tourism business should be that of attracting clients who are offered quality services. In this regard, we have noticed that those websites that offer many destinations and many services are not very easily used, and their quality is very low. It is recommended that they should choose a strong point that they may use and specialize in. the specificity of each tourism agency may be adapted for all categories of tourists, without needing the offer for all destinations.

In conclusion, the tourism portals should focus on originality, specificity and should regain their credibility related to the price – quality relationship.

Up to a certain level, the usability degree also depends on the purpose and target public of the site. There is a general agreement related to the web usability, which takes into consideration that the site should be accessible, attractive, consistent, clear, simple, navigable and tolerant to errors.

For the best results, it is recommended to use a variety of methodologies in order to create websites and to treat the design as a repetitive and active process.[14]

A site as much taste should be the user should answer the criteria of usability, not alone to raise the value of services a company's e-tourism

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