An Application On The Effects of Internet and Information Systems Usage Tourism Distribution Channels

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Extensive Summary

Introduction

To put on sale a product or service, and deliver it to the consumer process is called as distribution systems (Hudson, 2008, s. 218). In traditional tourism distribution systems, customers go to travel agencies and look for possible pull offs and services that they want to take a vocation from printed catalogues.

Innovations like the Internet emerging in the information age make serious changes in almost all sectors. There are important changes in tourism sector as well. Web sites called online travel agencies (OTAs), for example, enable customer to purchase vocation packages and tourism services via the Internet. This radical change also significantly alters tourism distribution systems and brings about emerging of huge OTAs like TripAdvisor.com and booking.com offering world-wide vocational services (Coldwell, 2016). In this study, it is aimed to investigate OTAs preferences, utilization ratio of OTAs and why customers prefer OTAs for vocational services.

Tourism, Internet and Information Systems

Tourism is a temporary accommodation for individuals consuming goods and services produced by tourism establishments, providing that they are not to sit on generating revenue and not to make the establishment as a permanent accommodation (Usta, 2009, s. 7; Hall ve Lew, 2009, s. 5-7). Tourism is one of the most important sector. 10% of labor in the world is employed in tourism sector. Similarly, the ratio of tourism in GDP is approximately 10 % (Sezgin, 2015). Tourism is an important sector to pay attention for almost all countries because of its effect on deficit balance and generating employment.

Internet is a world-wide systematic computer network which enable individuals to access, share and also trade with the communities (facebook.com, etstur.com, vb.) and virtual structures composed of variety digital resources of institutional goods and services in addition to personal data, information and documents.

Information systems (IS) collect organizational data according to the business routines defined by the organization, process the data and generate reports for supporting decision making process. Information systems composed of four main components. These are computers (operating systems, software and hardware), network and Internets, information system software and procedures. From this point, systems developed for supporting tourism organizations' decision making processes are called tourism information systems.

Aim, Justification and Sample of the Study

In this study it is aimed to investigate at which rate individuals use Internet for purchasing vocational packages, accommodation and excursion tickets. In addition, it is also investigated at which rate customer use the establishment web site instead of OTAs. That is, why individuals prefer OTAs is also in the scope of the study. The result of the study also indicates preferences about the new OTAs.

Research Method

Since the data collected form the participants shows categorical characteristics, non-parametric statistical tests were employed. In this context, chi-square analysis was used to determine whether the difference between the two discrete variables is statistically significant or not (Tabachnick ve Fidell, 2013, s. 58). IBM SPSS v.23 was used for statistical analysis.

Findings

According to the findings, there is a statistically significant relationship between purchasing vocation packages – accommodation via internet and education level ($\chi2(3)=14,267;p<0,05$). However, there is no statistically significant relationship between age ($\chi2(4)=8,879;p>0,05$) and sexuality ($\chi2(1)=0,888;p>0,05$).

In terms of motivation of customers to prefer purchasing vocation packages – accommodation via internet, user comments and price comparison have the greatest impact on customer preferences (22,9 %). On the other hand, confidence has the lowest impact on customer preferences.

With respect to the relationship between whether the participants use internet for purchasing bus and flight ticket or not and demographic information (sex, age, education level), there is no statistically significant relationship between sex and purchasing ticket preference ($\chi2(1)=0,168;p>0,05$). On the contrary, there is a statistically significant relationship between purchasing ticket via internet and age (($\chi2(4)=16,379;p<0,05$).

Accordingly, 86% of participants purchasing ticket via internet are aged between 23 and 36. This may be because of the fact that young population come into prominence in terms of internet use (Law R., Leung, Lo, Leung ve Fong, 2015, s. 445).

There is also statistically significant relationship between education level and ticket purchasing preference (($\chi2(3)=23,530;p<0,05$). This is also the case for purchasing vocation packages – accommodation via internet. What motivate the participants to buy tickets via internet may be explained by easy access (91,7 % of participants) and price comparison (63,9% participants).

According to finding, there is no relationship between participants' internet use habit and purchasing vocation packages – accommodation via internet. That is, using internet more or less does not affect vocation packages – accommodation purchasing behavior ($\chi2(3)=5,274;p>0,05$). However, internet use habit has statistically significant relation with purchasing ticket behavior ($\chi2(3)=12,444;p<0,05$).

Suggestions

In order to improve the study, limitations should be eliminated as is for all researches. For example, different socio-demographic groups can be included to increase the generalizability of the study. Moreover, including different variables such as; geographic location, employment status, profession, number of traveler and prices may reduce limitations' effects on future studies.

Discussion and Conclusion

In conclusion, the effect of Internet on tourism information systems and online tourism agencies was explained in this study. To do so; sex, age, education level, internet use habits were defined as factors that can affect purchasing behavior of customers. Chi-square analysis was employed to understand customers' purchasing vocation packages- accommodation and travel tickets preferences. Results show that age, education level and internet use habits affect ticket purchasing behavior. Education level also important factor for purchasing vocation packages via Internet. Price comparison, customer comments and easy access are the main reasons of using OTAs.