Executive summary

THE IMPACT OF WEB ON HOTELLERIES IN CAPRI

Introduction

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have a wide number of applications and tourism, for its intrinsic features, is a major field for their use.

Tourism and hospitality have always been among the first areas to invest on new technologies, which impact on both the consumer perspective on a side, and the suppliers, on the other.

Being an information-based field, ICTs rely heavily on the finding and developing new tools to distribute travel and hospitality products and services, marketing information to customers, and on providing comfort and convenience to travelers.

Similarly, consumers are constantly seeking new sources of information to help them make decisions in order to purchase optimal travel services and making their journeys more satisfying.

Most of tourism-related products and services are intangible, perishable, emotionally appealing, and people-oriented. Therefore, consumers carefully search for information about the product or services before their choice.

Consumers need up to date fast, and interactive information immediately available 24 hours a day, seven days a week: the web has made a dream coming 'immediately' true.

On the other hand from the supplier's point of view, information about service, price, weather conditions, programs and schedules can be updated constantly and any time, providing an unprecedented flexibility.

Hence touristic companies have widely adopted ICTs to lower the costs, enhance operational efficiency, and most importantly to improve service quality and customer experiences: the creation of intranets and extranets provides new opportunities for businesses to make communications with each other always more effectively.

Finally, for what concern hotel managers, they largely rely on ICTs for strengthen the image of their hotels.

Aim of this thesis is to investigate how ICTs impacted on luxury hotels in Capri, a well established target for tourists.

Methods

Three approaches were used to perform the introduced research action on the impact of ICTs on the major 5 stars hotels in Capri.

1. A preliminary comprehensive update of hotel locations and classifications in Capri was performed.
2. A second approach included an unstructured interview of the five stars hotel's top managers in Capri to ask how ICTs impacted on their facilities, with a specific reference to touristic fluxes, and how they contributed to strengthen the image of each hotel. To this aim a questionnaire has been provided.
3. Lastly, top managers clarified the effectiveness of modern e-Tourism platform, affecting the competitiveness of all tourism

organizations, through a comparison of individual policies that each hotel adopted for this 2010.

This thesis focuses on the "case of Villa Marina hotel" as a new established hotel to evaluate the already mentioned scenario.

Results:

According to classification described in the previous section (see Methods) herein the major approaches are presented:

There are 142 hospitality structures in Capri, 7 of which are the top levels in the 5 stars system. Most of them have a very long tradition, whereas Villa Marina is the most recent hotel.

However, the information arisen from the top managers analysis, allowed to conclude that a major focus was only given to six hotels: Villa Marina, Quisisana,, Punta Tragara, Scalinatella ,Casa Morgano, JK Place that are all the five/five stars Luxury-hotels in-the island of Capri.

Studies demonstrate that different historical and traditional criteria, that each structure jealously possesses, are a the most important features adopted by each hotel to attract customers. Based on these strong characteristics a high number of returning guests has been observed that focus on tradition, rather than on web technologies.

While for the above structures the use of web technologies are limited for what concern reservation system and even for hotel management, for Villa Marina, the newcomer in this environment, ICTs are proven to be very useful.

Focusing more directly on "the case Villa Marina" its meaning of "boutique hotel" appears quite interesting for two main reasons: the first is that its location is far away from the centre which is the social life and nightlife of the island.

In addition, being a new hotel Villa Marina needs to build a brand new image. Hence, a peculiar setting with a wide pattern of different rooms identified by the name of famous persons in Capri and different rates. As a consequence the reservation systems need to be carefully managed and web technologies are intensively used in order to achieve this efficiency.

Furthermore, the top management adopts special processes as the "data mining" technique to anticipate policies and build effective responses in line with their guests preferences. This approach provides precious information that help the hotel manager to draw a "customers profile". It also provides the basis and set up for applying what IT managers call "dialogue with customers". In this way hotel management exploits ITCs to be proactive and predict customers' needs.

Therefore, technological convergence enhances speed, interoperability, reliability, while adapting the procedures and services to the consumer needs.

An improved knowledge of Villa Marina customers enables its management to provide services and products in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

As clear, ICTs has built a perfect match between the needs of travel and hospitality and hotels.

Conclusions:

In conclusion, the intense competition in today's business environment means that hotels have to work hard to maintain and develop their competitiveness.

The success of a business, to certain extent, depends on its ability to acquire and utilize updated information to assist its management and processes.

The optimization of ICTs and its tailoring to specific hotel structures and management, which takes into consideration the hotel specific features, should increase the hotel effectiveness (value for the customer) and efficiency (less costs for the providers).

Hence, Information and Communication Technology assists organizations to manage information dynamically and influences business competitiveness through assisting decision makers to make appropriate investments and decisions.

The strong impact of ICTs systems is evident for what concern Villa Marina hotel, working cooperatively to build an image, never existed before and that was born in this new technological environment.

In fact ICTs assist the management at delivering quality services to their customers and at enhancing operational efficiency and control costs.

This approach is not well-suited for the other hotels.

 In fact, from their views is enhanced how the power of a technological and new image is often seen as a threat, since it puts their managements in charge of doing heavy efforts to maintain unchanged the exclusiveness of their already-established hotels.

Hence, if destination managers would read these results in a different perspective, they will address criticism and instigate some improvements.
But the fear to damage their prestigious tradition and integrity, saved by an ancient customer base, puts the already mentioned Quisisana, Punta

Tragara, Scalinatella and Casa Morgano to take a critical look at the "new sophisticated and experienced customers to serve" (Buhalis 2008 "Information Communication technology Revolutionizing Tourism").