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APPLICATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP MARKETING MODEL IN TOURIST FIRMS

The following paper presents the model of the relationship marketing in tourist services. In the first part the theoretical basis knowledge (the elements and results) about relationship marketing have been presented. Apart from that the theory of strategic learning of that form of marketing and the essence of the loyalty programmes have been showed.

Keywords: relationship marketing, tourist firm, tourist services, loyalty program, segmentation.

Introduction. Relationship marketing should be defined in terms of customer's satisfaction, which is the main goal for every company. Strictly speaking, this one could be defined as a range of marketing, sales, communication, service and customer care approaches to identify a company's individual customers in order to create a long term relationship meant to obtain repetitive transactions to the benefit of both parties. The specificity of the tourism sector enables to use instruments for relationship marketing in tourism companies. The relationship marketing model idea is individualization and personalization of relationships with customers from the tourist company.

Analysis of recent researches and publications. Until recently, the subject of relationship marketing in tourist firms was not often raised in theoretical considerations. Currently, there are more publications about relationship marketing in other spheres. Problems of relationship marketing are showed in the works of such scientists, as: Claycomb C., Martin C.L. [1], Dejnak C. [2], Gordon H. [4], Tkaczyk S. [8] and others.

The aim of the article is to investigate the features of relationship marketing in tourist sphere.

Main material. Relationship marketing differs from traditional marketing but operates on the same principles. Traditional marketing is based on statistical segmentation of customers who are grouped on similar characteristics.

The selected target segment is always anonymous, we only have an accurate picture of the group statistical representative.

On this background, relationship marketing is an important proposal to strengthen competitive position. Well-conducted marketing activities result in cost savings, focus on the most important customers, knowing them and above all raising their level of satisfaction with products and services. It in turn leads to build a sustainable base of loyal customers and raise barriers to their transition to competition. In practice, it often turns out that individuals enjoying a higher rate of loyalty perform better in key areas valued by customers than companies with a lower index. Branches that do not maintain standards of losing customers to competitors.

Table 1 shows the components of relationship marketing and it brings the results of their application.

Table 1 – Elements and results of relationship marketing,
(developed by author on the base of [7])

Some of the main elements	Some typical results
regular surveys among customers and competitors	balance in marketing activity
concentration in all major markets	better processes and systems
thorough analysis / integration sales plan	difficult, but feasible targets
use of database	better ways to retain customers

In order to obtain the desired results in relationship marketing it is necessary to service the most important and priority customers and also to allocate resources to satisfy their needs. Those, who are responsible to conduct relationship marketing, should ensure in particular the capacity development, which allow customers to provide customized value priority. There are four basic strategic relationship marketing resources, which are shown in Figure 1.

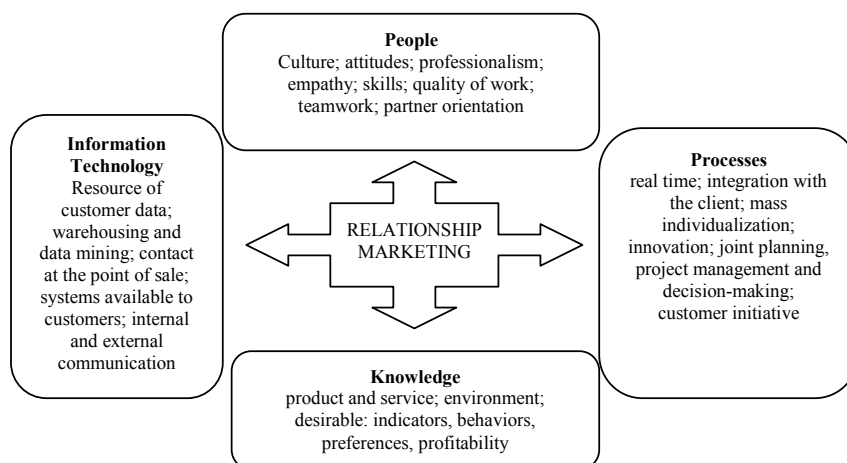


Figure 1 – Strategic resources of the relationship marketing, (formed with the use of [4])

The partnership is impossible without people because it means that people have the greatest impact on the creation of relationships and partnerships between operators. Their role in the relationship marketing also includes the management of processes and technologies that are necessary to create value together with the buyer and the buyer, and are used to gather knowledge about the selected customers. Marketing company changes its employees's tasks and roles after entering the relationship.

The activities ensuring the sustainable development of enterprises and high profitability are the most important. Indicators and evaluation criteria are external, because instead of the product, which the customer takes into consideration. Marketers are members of the teams, which includes representatives from all departments in order to serve priority customers. Team work is assessed by both customers and the company management.

There are developed strategies based on stronger relationships with customers in search of how to gain competitive advantage and effectively differentiate themselves in the market. The customer should be treated as an investment, which is the source of long-term benefits for the

company. To achieve this, you have not only to get new customers but to stop them so, that they believe particular company or brand.

The leading providers in today's markets are constantly thinking about the client. They analyze the principle of operation, know its flaws, undermine its assumptions and take responsibility for initiating change. In this new market, the emphasis is put on people. Firms which are close to the client work in openness and trust. Integration with customer requires total commitment. It requires discipline involving the entire creative imagination: the heroic service of support, the source use of information technology and constant readiness to accompany the customer for good and bad.

The need to strengthen ties with customers is based on economic calculation results made by company. They show that acquiring of new customers entails costs in expected benefits excess. A significant portion of its revenues reach thanks to loyal customers. Customer's retention is the most difficult task, but at the same time brings the greatest benefit:

- company is persisted in the branch;
- regular customers buy more in the long run;
- cost of sales, marketing and start-up recoupe in the long term customer relationship with the company;
- operate loyalty often cost less;
- satisfied customers recommend the service, which widens the circle of buyers;
- satisfied customers are willing to pay higher price.

The success of the compounds between customers and the company is based on the transformation of ordinary buyers allies company. In this way they become executors of marketing and business at the same time provide financial benefits.

Companies can affect the loyalty of clients through the provision which they will receive only loyal buyers. These benefits are different privileges and rewards that make customers benefit from the transaction and at the same time customers feel exceptionally treated. In order to achieve these targets there are useful marketing clubs, card loyal customers and rewarding loyalty programs.

Customer's loyalty to the company is very important because it affects a large degree on its recognized benefits, which can include the amount of its profits, in the long run also larger market share.

To acquire a new customer is much more expensive than to maintain a constant customer. That's why companies struggle to win their clients trust by helping with the different types of relationship marketing tools. The most commonly used are: promotions, sales, price reductions, which can benefit selected groups of customers. The company primarily is focused on the loyalty program.

Key elements of relationship marketing are loyalty programs. Loyalty program is a tool used to establish and maintain positive relationships with the selected most valuable customers. The assumption is a long-term, interactive and involves multiple customer contact. The loyalty program is very often confused with promotion of loyalty, which usually lasts a short time and is focused on rapid sales growth.

Loyalty program is used in order to inhibit the decline in sales and do not cause an increase. Loyalty program will bring the desired results if the company knows about the individual customers' behavior and preferences. It may then finely match the offer to the customer's expectations thereby causing satisfaction with the transaction, which in the end also allows you to generate customer's confidence towards the company or brand. Loyal customers are cheaper to be operated, are less sensitive to price changes, more spend on shopping,

generate some highly profitable constant speed, are a source of free and credible advertising.

The companies determine how a loyalty program is developed and which moment will be the most suitable for its introduction. Frequently loyalty programs are useful when a market is saturated in which the company operates or when the offers available on the market are very similar and there is a need to distinguish the product from the rest. Loyalty programs help also to weaken the position of competitive companies. Sometimes it happens that customers are beginning to feel fatigue of numerous commercials and become insensitive to the promotional activities of this type, then it begins to increase the gap between them and the manufacturer.

Specific of the tourist services. Tourist services are “all socially useful activities, aimed at satisfying the tourist’s material and immaterial (spiritual) needs (...) Tourist services include various activities necessary for the tourist, enabling to include access to the location of tourist assets, stay in this place, and then return to the residence”.

The most popular tourist services are: transportation, hotel, catering, information, banking, recreation and physical culture, or shopping.

Tourist services have such characteristics:

- tourist services cover a wide range of activities to meet the tourism participants’ needs, they are provided to the individual tourist or group of tourists;
- tourist services fulfill important social functions: provide rest and renewal of biological and psychological forces, furthermore create conditions for the development of the human personality;
- travel services create the basis of economic activity, and the economic sense is that they are developed due to other than the usual place of tourist’s residence living conditions and new needs that arise during the tourist trip – they are an important factor in the development of the village, rich the tourist attractions;
- tourist services are diverse in terms of time, space and genre demand for these services;
- a large part of tourist services in Poland has a market characteristic, they are partially or fully paid for, although some of them are provided free of tourists, for example: information services;
- feature some tourist services is the ability to provide them with an intermediary;
- tourist services are sold first and then the serviced;
- tourist services are in a complementary relationship with the tourist values in the socio-economic utility of tourism values is conditional on appropriate dynamics and structure of tourist services.

It is thus apparent that the travel services determine the overall development of tourism.

The most characteristic element of tourist services is the consumer’s location at the center of attention. Decisions are subordinated to the customer as far as decisions about shaping it offers, its valuation method for delivering services and the choice of promotion means are concerned. Travel companies should have a system to adapt better service offerings to meet the consumers’ needs.

Moreover, it should be available to customers, which is connected to its corresponding location, easy access, convenient opening hours, clear and transparent information about the offer. Travel companies should use technical measures to improve work at customer service. In addition, an important feature of the tour company is to use instruments of internal marketing, treating employees as internal customers as well as the introduction of an appropriate training policy, and motivating employees.

Approach model of relationship marketing in tourism services. The specificity and characteristics of tourism services successfully enable to use relationship marketing instruments in tourism companies.

Relationship marketing model (Figure 2) implementation, the idea of which is to individualize and personalize the relationship, will help to develop and strengthen ties between service company and customers which will also lead to improve the quality of tourist services. As a result, the customers (tourists) and the service company will be required, as part of the relationship, a high quality level value. It is also proposed to make the relations closer with the surrounding tourist company for example with suppliers.

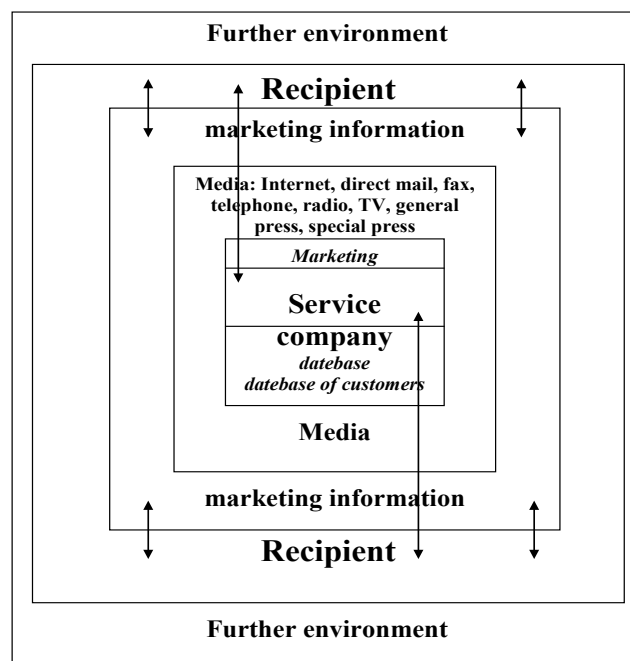


Figure 2 – Relationship marketing model in a tourist company

The model also proposes to use informational technologies in relations between the partners (travel company, customers and the environment), ie. use of the Internet, the creation and use of marketing databases.

The presented model shows that relationship marketing is not a one-sided flow of information between the company and the recipient of its services. It is often the classic marketing. In building principles and the relationship marketing basics of the mutual communication between the two side – the bidder and the buyer and the relationship between them is important.

These relations should be constructed with the use of the customer database. This database is a prerequisite to enter the partnership between the company and its customers. In the tourist company it enables to transmit regular customers from the point of view of their bids and re-examine the effectiveness of contact and building loyalty.

Through the direct media, which are the basis for the construction of a loyalty program, it is possible to reach selected and strictly categorized customers during limiting marketing costs. The customer is closely associated with the company through the use of tourist services. Everything will be possible only if the client is satisfied with the service. If it is so, reducing the cost to reach the potential customer, the customer may be offered the product at a more attractive price. The customer informs the loyalty company through buying a product or abandoning it. This direct two-way communication means that the company obtains information and may be modified thanks to them and makes the product more suitable to the needs of loyal customers who become permanent source of income for the company.

Conclusions and directions of further researches. The following paper presents the model of the relationship marketing in tourist services. In the first part the theoretical basis knowledge (the elements and results) about relationship marketing are presented. Apart from that authors show the form strategic learning theory concerning marketing and the essence of the loyalty programmes. The second part is devoted to the tourist services and their specialty. In the third part the model of the relationship marketing in tourism itself is presented. The model includes the interactions between the tourism company and the closer and further environment. The main elements of the interaction system within the relationship marketing are the integrated elements of marketing. They are communicated with the use of media for the receivers (customers). In the contrary to the traditional marketing, in the relationship marketing there is database which is the basis to build the loyalty programmes. The paper is concluded in refer to the tourist companies as far as the use of marketing instruments is connected with implementing relationship marketing in the tourist company.

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I. Совієр-Каспишук. Застосування моделі маркетингу відносин у туристичних компаніях

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Застосування моделі маркетингу відносин у туристичних компаніях

У статті досліджуються особливості застосування маркетингу відносин у туристичних компаніях. Автором проаналізовано теоретичні основи маркетингу відносин. Виокремлено особливості цього виду маркетингу порівняно з іншими формами взаємодії з клієнтами. Досліджено сутність програм лояльності у сфері туристичних послуг.

Ключові слова: маркетинг відносин, туристична фірма, туристичні послуги, програма лояльності, сегментація.

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Использование модели маркетинга отношений в туристических компаниях

В статье исследуются особенности использования маркетинга услуг в туристических компаниях. Автором проанализированы теоретические основы маркетинга услуг. Выделены особенности этого вида маркетинга в сравнении с другими формами взаимодействия с клиентами. Исследована сущность программ лояльности в сфере туристических услуг.

Ключевые слова: маркетинг отношений, туристическая фирма, туристические услуги, программа лояльности, сегментация.

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