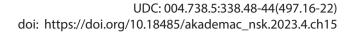# CHAPTER 15

THE ROLE OF THE INTERNET MEDIA IN THE PROMOTION OF RURAL TOURISM OF MONTENEGRO - DIGITAL MARKETING

Dina Mujevic[1]
Mersad Mujevic[2]
ORCID ID: 0000-0003-4510-9926

Abstract: The cultural heritage of a nation is reflected in material and immaterial assets that together build its national identity. Folk creativity is often presented as a part of intangible cultural heritage that takes shape and is presented through music, song, dance, customs, and language, as well as traditional values and crafts. Intangible cultural heritage is found in its original, unchanged form in rural areas. Taking into account the picture of the state of the villages in Montenegro as well as the trends of movement that arose as a result of the development of society, it can be said that certain parts of the cultural heritage, primarily intangible, are in danger of being forgotten. Therefore, we should work on preserving the cultural heritage, where through tourism, as a very powerful activity, we can preserve the cultural heritage from oblivion, because in this way we preserve our national identity. In the Montenegrin rural market, continuous improvement of the quality of tourist offers can be observed, through the creation of new tourist products, the digitization of business, the application of modern technologies - the Internet in the promotion and sale of tourist services, etc. The Internet is certainly the most interesting and efficient system of direct and indirect, individual and mass communication.

Keywords: rural tourism, internet, intangible cultural heritage, promotion

1   Dina Mujević, University of Donja Gorica - Podgorica, Montenegro,
    e-mail: dinamujevicc@gmail.com

2   Mersad Mujević, International University in Novi Pazar - Republic of Serbia,
    e-mail: mersadm.mujevic@uninp.edu.rs

1. Introduction

Managing tourism at the level of a town, region or a wider geographical entity implies a focus on a greater number of factors, and a certain systematicity, all to determine a specific marketing strategy that will contribute to the achievement of the set goals of each specific tourist destination. Advertising policy plays a very important role in activities on the tourist market. Promotion is a process of communication between companies and consumers to create a positive attitude about products and services. In the past, the price, along with the product, was the basic tool for achieving a competitive advantage in the market. With the development and maturity of the market and the need for market segmentation and product differentiation, product positioning and image building become increasingly important. To improve the positioning of a tourist destination, quality promotional activity is needed, first of all through a more intensive presentation of the integrated tourist product through general tourist propaganda (Vuletić, 2015).

The application of digital marketing in tourism has become a necessity in the global tourism market and is therefore extremely important in modern business. Thanks to modern ICT technologies, tourists are well informed about the offer of the destination. Their expectations are much higher and their needs are more demanding than before.

Effective digital marketing must meet certain conditions: it must be tailored to consumers, it must create a competitive advantage, and its elements must be well connected and coordinated with the company's available resources.

The Internet plays a very important role in today's business; it is impossible to imagine modern tourism without it. Presentation on the Internet is the best advertisement, and the essence of advertising on the global network is that the owner of the website can always change some aspects to stay current.

The topicality and interestingness of websites about the tourist offer are a good way to help the faster recovery of that economic branch and better tourist traffic in all countries.

The results achieved by Montenegrin rural tourism in previous years when we talk about the application of ICT and digital marketing in general are quite weak. One of the reasons for this is the undefined nature of the tourist product and the underdevelopment of Montenegro's tourist offer. Considering the possibilities, the results achieved by Montenegro are realistically low. In the paper, the most important tourism potentials that Montenegro has been highlighted, the current situation is analyzed, and a proposal of measures for better promotion of Montenegro is given.

2. Rural tourism in Montenegro

The full 70 years since the creation of the first rural tourist household was marked in 2021. Back in 1951, in the small typical village of Chandal à la Java in Provence, France, Senator Emile Aubert launched a pilot project of organizing tourist services in rural agro-tourism households, the aim of which was to preserve the rural environment and stop the migration of the population to people from rural areas. creation of new earning opportunities through service tourism, preservation of old crafts, and revitalization of local agriculture. An old, abandoned barn of traditional construction that belonged to local shepherds and farmers was turned into a home, i.e. a country house, for vacation, i.e. a cottage in the countryside, remodeled and named Gîtes (cottage). From this small house, where a successful pilot project was implemented, the development of rural tourism, as we know it today, began.

In these times of stress, lack of time, and lack of quality activities, agritourism is an excellent opportunity to escape from stressful everyday life and offers the possibility of a pleasant vacation that evokes nostalgia for past times. The value and necessity of the rural way of life and activities in the countryside - especially through agriculture - are also proven by the research of the British magazine Country Living with very interesting results. Of the 1,000 respondents, 41% said that moving to the countryside had made their lives more exciting: and 39% said that their lives had improved or expected it to. Of those who moved to the countryside, 43% say they spend more time with their partner, 37% have more mutual friends, 26% fight less, and overall satisfaction among those who moved from the city to the countryside is higher than those who did not move.

For the stated reasons, the reasons for coming to the village such as; peace, untouched nature, interaction with new people, healthy diet, pleasure in eating, slow pace, and physical activities, are responsible for the emergence and survival of rural tourism as tourism that is directed towards the guest, the individual and his needs

Of course, this complete upheaval in the way of doing business was largely contributed to by the development of ICT. The development of central reservation systems (CRS) and global distribution systems (GBS), as well as ICT in general, has completely transformed the tourism business.

Rural Montenegro represents a key part of the Montenegrin population and resources. Today, 38% of the territory of Montenegro is rural, between 36.4% and 38.02% of the population lives in rural areas, and it is estimated that around 11% of GDP comes from rural areas. The rural economy in Montenegro relies heavily

on agriculture, with about 70% of the rural population engaged in subsistence agriculture.

However, despite the richness of natural and cultural resources, rural areas are still burdened by high unemployment rates, depopulation, low economic activity, and declining natural resources. Also, many members of the household are not registered as agricultural producers even if they help in daily agricultural work."

In Montenegro, some of its territorial areas lead the way in terms of rural tourism development compared to others. Here we are talking about the Northern and Central regions of the country. Their geomorphological characteristics are one of the main reasons for the progress and shift in rural tourism, and the north and center are adorned with beautiful hilly and mountainous areas. Culture has a very close relationship with rural tourism, and the fact that more than 14 people and nationalities live in the territory of Montenegro contributed to this. That is why different parts of Montenegro have different, distinctive cultures, which intertwine with each other and build our national identity.

Most rural areas and villages also have their festivals, exhibitions, competitions, and similar events. These festivals were created as a result of the local population's desire to celebrate and enjoy certain events, such as foundation days or, say, harvest periods, grape harvest. However, taking into account the economic component of these festivals, there was a desire to attract as many tourists as possible during the festival. Among the most represented types of festivals are music concerts, festivals of folk creativity, food festivals, etc. (Mujević, 2021).

Therefore, we can say that there are exceptional opportunities for the development of rural tourism in Montenegro for the following reasons:

1. Montenegro already has the foundation of rural tourism that has been developed over many years, especially in the northern and central parts of the country.

2. The largest part of the territory of Montenegro is rural with a large and diverse number of natural and cultural assets that are spread throughout the country.

3. In Montenegro, there is a possibility of defining a truly Montenegrin experience of rural tourism, which is of a holistic nature and which integrates these different components, thus creating a competitive positioning of Montenegro.

4. Rural tourism is largely related to many different typologies of tourism, many of which represent products that have already been developed by the National and tourist organizations of Montenegro.

5. Rural tourism should play a key role in the protection and improvement of the natural environment in Montenegro. The natural environment is one

of the strongest resources of Montenegro and should be protected and improved through the responsible development of rural tourism.

6. Rural tourism can play a key role in Montenegro in terms of diversifying the rural economy, which will create opportunities for the creation of new jobs that will generate additional income for rural households, reduce unemployment (especially among the female population and young people) and help to maintain and repopulating villages.

7. Qualitative analysis of the rural tourism sector shows that there are many gaps and deficiencies in most units, such as tourist goods, activities related to leisure and entertainment, restaurants, crafts, and agricultural products that are directly or indirectly used by the tourism sector. From a positive point of view, these shortcomings represent opportunities that can be used for the development of various activities, especially small and medium-sized enterprises.

However, on the other hand, there are also a large number of problems and obstacles that stand in the way of the development of rural tourism, and they should be addressed and work on their elimination. Here we are talking, among other things, about the way of organizing and communicating with national, regional, and local stakeholders that would result in the management of the development of rural tourism in a sustainable way, then about human resources, understanding their immeasurable value and using them in the best possible way. However, one of the biggest problems, which is most often the focus, is the state of the road infrastructure and the lack of education of the local population and participants in rural tourism.

In the continuation of the work, I will show several photos of the Montenegrin village.

Figure 1. Appearance of rural households (example)

3. Basic factors that can help the better presentation of rural tourism in Montenegro

3.1. Local communities

In modern conditions, effective and successful development of local communities is difficult to imagine without strategic planning, which includes analysis, planning, definition of goals, implementation, and evaluation of achieved effects. Rural development is a complex socio-economic segment that connects numerous issues related to employment, service activities, etc. Some local rural areas are increasingly developing into places suitable for the quality of life of different categories of the population, taking over the function of places of rest, recreation, tourism, etc. Thus, over time, rural areas turn into places of consumption, not just places of production. production. The development of rural areas and the development of rural tourism as an important element of local economic development is a systematic process that enables local actors to work together to create better conditions for economic growth and improve the quality of life of all residents of the local community. Together, they define future directions of development, set goals, and define ways to achieve them. It also serves as a basis for determining the municipality's investment plan. Rural development indicates the importance and ability of the local community to live and act together, based on mutual trust, connection, engagement, and norms, which enables social actors to more successfully influence the achievement of common goals through individual and collective action. Local unity, not disorganization, is the key success factor in the development of local tourism (www.ruralholiday.me).

3.2. Resource map - your environment

Creating a resource map is an unavoidable activity that needs to be carried out to record all the tourist potential of a destination. When registering resources, it is necessary to geographically identify all potential resources in an area. The resource map is the overall basis of the development of tourism in general, and especially of certain forms of tourism. It is necessary to fully utilize the resources in the region to see the possibilities of developing any form of tourism and upgrading certain properties. This type of record gives us information about whether we have the conditions and in which direction it is necessary to develop specific forms of tourism, including rural ones, or whether we do not have any opportu-

nities for them. It is evident that a large number of villages do not have a single resource that would enable them to develop some form of tourism and that does not make them attractive or recognizable.

The recording of resources can be done by the local community, household, or association that is responsible for the development of tourism in a certain destination. This certainly does not mean that at the beginning of the development of any form of tourism, you must have a printed map of the village/region, but that you know what you have at your disposal as a local community, that is, whether and what you can use when creating a tourist product. For example: On the territory of your local community, you have a viewpoint from which you can enjoy a unique and beautiful view of your village. Include it in the resource map. Only a picturesque, safe, and accessible point can find its place on such a map. The resource map was created based on the natural values of the area. The list of natural values must include the most important elements, starting with the altitude, location of the village, climatic factors, description of flora and fauna, watercourses, and any peculiarities, if any, in the area.

The following is a record (list) of all anthropogenic values. This includes the record of its cultural and historical heritage, but also libraries, museums, religious buildings, historical archives, galleries, and ambient units. In the creation of the resource base, we must take into account the entire infrastructural base as well as the material base for the development of rural tourism, as all the elements of the superstructure contribute to higher quality and more substantial tourist offers of the village or region.

3.3. Promotion and thus sale of rural tourism product

The sale of rural tourism products depends on good advertising and sales strategy. The complexity of this product consists in the fact that it is made up of numerous elements, that is, products, services, goods, and activities that satisfy the needs of tourists, such as accommodation, food, recreation, and the need for a pleasant and healthy stay in a tourist destination.

To sell such a product, it is necessary to devise an adequate sales strategy, in which the rural household must possess various creative, innovative abilities, knowledge, and skills. A successful sales strategy for a tourism product aims to find tourists, discover the needs that make them interested in the tourism product, and finally how to promote the tourism product, sell it, and maintain a relationship with their customers. A business strategy that is based on human resources can promote the sale of a complex and sensitive product that is consumed by

well-informed tourists. By improving the sale of tourist products, it is possible to increase tourist traffic and consumption and the economic justification of rural tourism.

Marketing (promotion) is a systematic and coordinated adaptation of the domestic economic policy to market conditions to identify the potential customer as quickly as possible and adapt the offer to the wishes and needs of customers, to achieve the expected profit.

Effective marketing is a key element of any business venture.

Even the best-designed tourism business can fail if potential clients are not informed about it.

When promoting your household, you emphasize two or three things that will be the main asset of your service:

1. Accommodation (quality, number of accommodation units, traditionally decorated ethnic house...),
2. Location (near the national park, near the nature park, tourist destinations, lakes, rivers, mountains...),
3. Proximity to historical landmarks,
4. Manifestations, etc.

The basic marketing elements that need to be applied in household promotion are as follows:

1. A message about your services,
2. Target group (who you want to attract),
3. Media – means of propaganda (website, printed material, radio, TV...).

4. The development of the Internet offers new and efficient ways of communicating, but also new forms of marketing

Selling via the Internet is an increasingly present area of digital marketing (Vračar, 2007). The use and impact of the Internet on society and the economy can be considered one of the key factors in the global transformation of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. In this regard, the use of the Internet and technologies derived from it for marketing purposes is one of the important directions of the development of all marketing activities, especially advertising. Internet systems in the tourism industry have the same function as in other activities, but what

is characteristic of tourism is that some institutions and organizations develop special information systems for various types of services, and they are therefore available to the tourism industry, governmental and non-governmental tourism organizations, as well as tourists themselves and other interested subjects (Stankić, R., Stankić, M., 2008).

The basic benefits that the Internet provides to potential users can be summarized as constant availability under affordable conditions, global character, providing special value by enabling the comparison of prices and products, facilitating the purchase decision process based on the evaluation of alternative products, and the offer of service organizations.

The Internet has an impact on the use of all marketing instruments by providing product improvement, reducing the cost of searching for information on new products and services, and as a new channel for market access - distribution, which has led to a significant elimination of mediation, which is particularly characteristic of tourism business. There is a special influence of the Internet on promotional activities through the use of electronic mail and presentations on the Internet and other modern forms of Internet use (Popesku, 2013).

The Internet is the "network of all networks". This made it possible to establish connections at all levels quickly and in a very simple way. The Internet stands for the global computer network that enables instant global communication. The deep and precise fragmentation of the market made possible by Internet marketing, the result of which is "One man - one segment", enables the transition from mass marketing to micromarketing. Information is immediately available to anyone interested, whether it is a price list, information about a new product, or other important news. Tourists have more choices, and more information and have become very demanding. Precisely because of this, to respond to the changes in the modern environment, experts in the field of marketing have become more available, smarter, and more innovative in creating and delivering products and services on the market (Živković, 2011).

Advantages of the Internet compared to other advertising media:
- Interactivity – two-way communication,
- Quick effect - Internet advertising increases the number of visits to websites, and thus the sale of products and services in a very short time.
- Effectiveness – Internet advertising campaigns are much more effective in terms of readership than traditional media campaigns.
- Distribution – ads published on the global network are visible all over the world.

The Internet as a new medium of multimedia communication has so far had the shortest acceptance time compared to other media (Vračar, 2007).

Internet marketing is the form of direct marketing that develops the fastest and adapts to current trends. In the information age, the exchange process is increasingly initiated and controlled by users. Consumers define what information they need, what offers they are interested in, and what price they are willing to pay (Kotler & Kevin, 2006). The rapid growth in the number of Internet users has also led to dramatic changes in its purpose and user structure.

This led to several very serious problems such as a large number of unnecessary messages, insufficient network access speed, insufficient privacy, security, etc.

Various forms of communication are available to Internet users, so far the greatest value has been demonstrated by: e-mail, mailing lists, discussion groups (blogs and forums), and the web.

E-mail and the web are the most important for marketing communication.

Email marketing involves directly addressing customers, suppliers, and partners via email, which brings numerous benefits, such as timely information, sales increase, brand awareness, loyalty, interactivity, and the like.

The web is a multimedia and interactive form of communication. Quality content ensures website traffic and up-to-date content provides a reason to return. Today, the Internet is used much more than television, radio, and other means of propaganda. The Internet offers new and efficient ways of communication, but also new forms of marketing. Selling via the Internet is an increasingly present area (Vračar, 2007). In the previous efforts of human society to realize the idea of globalization and individualization of the communication process, the project called the Internet provided the most effective solution.

Advertising on the Internet is possible through the website, but also in the form of skyscrapers, pop-ups, banners, or sponsorships.

- The website is used by companies to present information and their offers. It can be used as an online store catalog, as a form of advertising, or as a place to transmit commercial information.
- Skyscrapers are derived from a 120x600 or 160x600 pixel banner placed on the left or right edge of the web page.
- Pop-up windows appear on the Internet as additional windows when loading a web page, i.e. as advertising frames.
- Banners are the most common and simplest form of advertising using moving or static images. Clicking on the banner will take you to the advertiser's website. They usually have a format of 468x60 pixels. Today we can find them in different sizes because they started to take different shapes.
- Sponsorship combines editorial content and advertising. They provide an opportunity to sponsor website content, giving the sponsor a prominent place on the website.
- Blogs are online diaries that are kept and updated on web pages.

In 2023, more than half of the country's population uses the Internet, more precisely about 4.95 billion people. Compared to 2022, it is about 192 million more. So, the increase is four times higher than the increase in the number of inhabitants.

More reputable marketing media with their statisticians widely publish a cross-section of previous years and analyses of Internet users such as;

- Extra,
- Internet World Stats,
- DataReportal,
- Internet Live Stats).

The goal is to get to know them better, their affinities, needs, and habits to run successful campaigns and satisfied clients.

Practically, two out of three people use the Internet today. It is available to 65% of the population, and let's remember that it started only 30 years ago. The favorite browser is Chrome, and to date, the total number of sites has reached 1.8 billion.

4.1. What is done on the Internet?

What do people do connected to the Internet?

In almost all surveys, internet users stated that they are on the internet to get information.

In addition, the Internet is used by:

- to maintain contact with relatives and friends (54%)
- to keep up with the latest events and news (50%)
- to watch recordings, television shows, and movies (48%)
- research how to make or repair something, look for advice, inspiration, and ideas.

More interesting and expected is that 4.28 billion people use a smartphone to access the Internet. In 2023, a registered 5.2 billion people who own a mobile phone, almost all of them use their devices to be on the Internet.

On average, every person in the world today spends about 7 hours on the Internet.

4.2. Of all the Internet benefits, what does a person use most often?

- Spends 2 and a half hours on social networks,
- Watch online television for 3 and a half hours,
- He reads the news for 2 hours and two minutes,
- Listens to online music for an hour and 31 minutes,
- He listens to the radio for about an hour,
- Podcasts about 54 minutes a day,
- Today, the average inhabitant of the planet plays online games for an hour and 12 minutes.

4.2.1. Internet 2023

Novelties that are current and attract special attention and that will certainly influence the next "internet year", Above all, the growth of TikTok network users has accelerated. It is now clear that as many as 40% of global companies will include this Chinese network of short videos in their marketing campaigns in 2023. And then there are the gamers.

Gamers are a new "population" that is being researched in particular.

4.2.2. What else is expected from the Internet in 2023?

- Even in 2024, video formats will be the most popular, convincingly ahead of text and photos.
- More money will be spent on ads and campaigns on internet platforms.
- Audio formats will experience accelerated growth in the number of users. The increased popularity of podcasts is also expected.
- 2024 will demand more authenticity on the Internet.
- Virtual and "multi-layered" reality and similar content will be extremely popular.
- Influencers will continue their influence.
- E-commerce traffic increased by nearly 10% this year compared to 2021, so this trend will continue next year. By 2026, a turnover of about 8 billion dollars is expected and the Chinese will remain the biggest spenders over the Internet.

The digital revolution brought about by the Internet and e-commerce is radically changing the existing concepts of classical commerce. Space-time systems

are changing dramatically, thanks to which travel participants can now relatively quickly, easily, and for free gain a significant position in the market. According to most authors, the basic specificity of the tourist market is the spatial distance between the tourist offer and tourist demand, as well as the mobility of the offer itself, which also leads to increased cooperation and the formation of different distribution channels in tourism. This creates the basis for the development of direct sales, i.e. sales without intermediaries. Previously, it was catalogs, mailing lists, and various types of "classic" media, while today the Internet is taking the lead with the increasing use of various ICT and modern ways of doing business. Increases speed and ability reactions and thus achieves a better position on the market and realizes a higher degree of competitiveness.

A significant place in the mix of interactive communications on the Internet is occupied by social networks. The expansion of social networks has influenced the way of using the Internet in terms of greater use and user interaction. Users of social networks visit the Internet to share, evaluate, and exchange experiences about current events. They create content that they share with other users. Internet social networks are created on web pages known as social sites. They aim to connect as many users as possible in one virtual place. Promotion through social networks contributes to the company's business, first of all, by improving product recognition, increasing site visits, strengthening e-communication and sales, strengthening the presence on search engines, and strengthening the loyalty of users of products and services. It facilitates numerous marketing activities starting from market research, creation and verification of ideas, development of new products, improvement of relations with clients, and all forms of communication. The advent of social networks has changed the way companies present themselves on the market. You can find information about the tourist offers of Montenegro on all social networks (Facebook, Twitter, TripAdvisor, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Foursquare, YouTube, Flickr, and Google Plus profiles of the NTO of Montenegro), (www.montenegro.travel).

The world's most famous social networks are Facebook, Twitter and Linkedin, and Myspace. The Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism provided funds for e-marketing and for this purpose, in a public tender, chose an agency to implement an online campaign in the next four years.

Let's remember that Facebook[3] - a social network, attracts the most attention when it comes to business promotion. In the period from July 10 to August 7, 2023, the reach of the post on the Facebook page was 34,309 fans out of a total of 121,000 fans. Of the total number of page fans, 58.40% are women, while 41.60 are men.

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[3] www.facebook.com

The page has the most fans from the following countries: Serbia - 18,742; Macedonia – 17,938; Montenegro – 17,319; Bosnia and Herzegovina – 12,052; Poland – 9,194; Germany – 7,878; United Kingdom – 7,030; France – 4,348 Croatia – 3,225; Slovenia – 2,280.

Twitter, the fastest-growing social network in the world, allows you to read others and send your micro-text messages. The Twitter[4] page NTO"@SeeMontenegro[5] generated a total of 7,754 fans in the period from June 1 to July 1, 2023. Of the total number of page fans, 44.4% are women, while 55.5% are men.

LinkedIn[6] is a social network mainly intended for professionals. It is intended for business people, first of all, for professional networking.

The Myspace[7] social network began to offer users a variety of services, such as profiles, friends, blogs, and comments.

Through Google, NTO Montenegro[8] news was seen by residents of Germany, the USA, Poland, Serbia, France, the United Kingdom, Austria, Croatia, and Spain...

In the period from July 1 to August 7, 2023, the YouTube[9] page was visited by 2,639 fans.

In this period, there are a total of 2,639 new views, and the average video material viewed is 1 minute and 47 seconds. Fans spent a total of 78.6 hours watching the video material.

A doubled number of click visits to the website of the National Tourist Organization of Montenegro was registered, as well as a review of a promotional video from the territories of Albania, Azerbaijan, and Russia. Communication was established with all local tourist organizations to obtain promotional materials, information, and photos necessary for the implementation of the campaign. Documentation was collected on cycling and pedestrian paths throughout Montenegro, National Parks of Montenegro, etc.

The time spent on social networks is very interesting to analyze, as well as the reasons why people today entrust their hours to applications called "networks".

I will list some basic statistics regarding the use of Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp, and TikTok[10]:
- Everyone spends an average of 2 and a half hours a day online, with the Japanese being the least loyal to them (51 minutes per day), while the

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[4] www.twitter.com

[5] https://www.montenegro.travel/me

[6] www.linkedin.com

[7] https://myspace.com/

[8] https://www.montenegro.travel/me

[9] www.youtube.com

[10] https://www.tiktok.com/

Filipinos lead by far in terms of time spent on social networks (4 hours and 15 minutes). Europeans are online for an average of 1 hour and 49 minutes, and Americans for 2 hours and 7 minutes.

- YouTube leads by far in terms of time spent on the platform monthly. Everyone spends about 23 hours on the YouTube channel per month, while they spend about 19 hours on Facebook and about 10 hours on IG.

- Women, more precisely girls (16-24 years old), are the most present on the networks. Women use them for 3 hours and 14 minutes a day. By the way, at every age, women are more loyal to networks, comment more, and are generally more active.

- The TikTok application records an incredible growth of users. This Chinese invention is followed by Facebook, Whatsapp, Zoom Cloud Meetings, Instagram, and Facebook Messenger in terms of the number of new users.

- 40.4% and Internet users stated that they use social networks for work and travel. More precisely, for the sake of career advancement, they are active on social networks, and they follow colleagues, entrepreneurs, businessmen, and companies. Such activities are convincingly led by men regardless of age, and secondly, in the era of the need for healthy lifestyles on social networks, there is a strong activity around finding "healthy" destinations.

4.3. Online information for tourists in Montenegro

- The National Tourism Organization of Montenegro is constantly working on improving the existing official website dedicated to Montenegrin tourism (website search, new website design, daily content updates, etc.);

- In cooperation with M-tel, the free application "Montenegro Talking" was improved, which in a simple, fast, educational, and fun way, takes users to a large number of tourist locations and brings a completely new perception of what Montenegro has to offer;

- As a member of the EC for travel, the National Tourist Organization of Montenegro is enabled to present Montenegro on the iPad application, in Spanish, Portuguese, and French;

- Cooperation was established with Meanderbug - a group of travel writers and photographers who visit not only attractions but also small hidden places, and publish and promote their stories, written from the point of view of tourists, in the USA and Russia;

- A prize game "Win a trip to Montenegro" was organized on Facebook, and the best-received prizes of air transport, accommodation, various activities,

> local transport, and tasting of national cuisine in famous restaurants;
> · Geo portal is one of the activities implemented within the DIOD project - Development of innovative technologies in adventure tourism;
> · During 2022/23. Montenegro's tourist offer was regularly updated at www. facebook.com, www.youtube.com, www.twitter.com, www.flicker. com, and www.plus.google.com, www. LinkedIn. com, www.belocal.de, www.pinterest.com, etc.
> · The Ministry of Information Society and Telecommunications created a presentation on the website www.me with all the relevant information about Montenegro, all to strengthen the promotion, which connects this website with other official websites of institutions in Montenegro (state, local, public companies, museums, galleries, etc.) and in this way, the role of mediator between citizens and institutions of administration, economy, culture, etc. is enabled in a way.

In the period January-August 2023, the official tourism website of Montenegro www. Montenegro. travel was viewed by 253,438 visitors. A total of 754,078 pages were viewed.

25% more visits were recorded compared to the same period of the previous year.

In the first place are visits from Serbia, followed by visits from Montenegro, Italy, Germany, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the USA, Great Britain, France, Russia, etc.. Visitors to the site were most interested in general information about Montenegro, transport, travel agencies, what to do and visit, accommodation, natural beauty, events, etc.

The Call Center of the National Tourist Organization of Montenegro (+382 08000 1300), in the period from July to September 2022, received a total of 36 calls, 2 e-mails, and 3 messages via chat. Of these, 27 related to information, 16 calls for complaints, and 1 for praise.

Every received call, e-mail, and chat message is automatically identified and complaints are forwarded by call or e-mail to the competent institutions. If the complainant wants feedback, he is informed upon receiving the feedback from the competent authority.

Montenegro must resort to a faster introduction of ICT in all activities, especially in the tourism economy, from the aspect of increasing market share. In the current conditions, IT education of personnel is a priority. Classic sales channels that use the Internet are still represented in Montenegro, but still for informational purposes, partly for reservations and sales in one part. The introduction of online sales in Montenegro, in addition to reducing costs, would also mean the possibility of improving marketing and promotion activities, achieving a compe-

titive advantage, and increasing market share. The Government of Montenegro with the relevant Ministry, with the help of international organizations present in Montenegro, are making an effort to, along with education and stimulating measures, all tourism companies in Montenegro create their Web presentation, which is gradually being realized. In this context, the idea of the National Tourism Organization of Montenegro is to create a unique website of tourist content of Montenegro, with the possibility of providing interactive information that will include a destination management system with links to the websites of service providers from all sectors, and the possibility of booking "online", seems multi-useful. The government has already invested multi-million funds for the development of this and similar systems, which could become an irreplaceable way of maximizing profits and making it easier for clients to find their way around.

4.4. Improvement and further development of the Montenegro "Wild beauty" brand

Includes:
- Creating a new spot,
- campaigns on global networks,
- promotion of the offer on the market of the Region,
- providing support for the realization of the Dynamic packaging project,
- better promotions through the most famous tourist promotion portals Trip Advisor, Your Tour, Google, and similar,
- Define and implement specific communication, promotional, and other strategies for key markets – Germany, the UK, Scandinavian countries, and others.

5. Trends in digital marketing

5.1. Trends in Digital Marketing in 2023

In this paper, I will describe several undisputed trends in digital marketing in 2023/24. the year that can not only help the Montenegrin tourism event but also the economy of the country in different areas of activity.

Digital marketing is constantly changing. Almost every day something new becomes relevant, important, and necessary for survival in the global online race. Serious work requires following trends in digital marketing.

Trends in digital marketing in 2023 are based on the previous year 2022, however, with many changes and adjustments - primarily to users. When it comes to digital marketing, it's always important to keep up with trends and not blindly follow them. Only in this way is it possible (with experience) to predict certain phenomena and use such "power" to one's advantage.

5.2. What has changed, and what challenges await us in the coming period?

The previous year 2023 was a global miracle. Negative and specific in many respects, which is all a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and global restrictions on movement. Such a situation, which continued in 2023, caught most businesses and brands unprepared. At the same time, it contributed to the transfer to the digital market of many niches and businesses that were looking for salvation from bankruptcy and complete shutdown of business.

It was then that the power of regular monitoring of trends in digital marketing was demonstrated, and those who recognized in time, for example, the potential of web shops and created it before the pandemic, were able to continue business without major problems with minimal losses.

Thanks to the COVID-19 virus, it became clear that the world can never leave us indifferent and that we haven't seen everything yet. Mass fear and panic took their toll, so consumers became more cautious and wiser. They don't just buy and don't trust everyone.

One of the primary trends in digital marketing in 2023 will be predicting consumer and customer behavior, i.e. building trust and open communication.

In this paper, I will try to help in terms of predicting the direction in which we could develop our digital industry and present several of the most significant

digital trends that will be current during the year 2023/24, but also in the further future, and which, unfortunately, we in Montenegro are just beginning to use. , I mentioned the reasons earlier.

The first and perhaps the most important trend is artificial intelligence Why is artificial intelligence important? Artificial intelligence can efficiently and quickly collect information, perform any type of analytical research, recognize search patterns on the Internet, collect and analyze data from social networks, and thus save time and money. Many believe that artificial intelligence is a primary area to invest in and predict that in developed countries, as well as in those aware of the power of this technology, it could increase GDP by as much as 14% by 2030.

This is very important for individuals and large corporations that are still suspicious of artificial intelligence, because if they do not act on time and understand the importance of artificial intelligence - they could find themselves in a big technological lag.

A good example of the current use of artificial intelligence is chatbots, which were initially too generic, but over time have become a necessary ally of every website that keeps up with the times. Artificial intelligence will probably be the main driver of all services in the future, and for now, it has been successfully implemented:

- during basic online communication between buyer and seller (automated responses)
- when recommending products and services (e.g. when you look at one product or service, a destination is automatically recommended to you similar or something that would be useful to you, and is from a similar niche)
- for personalizing the email service
- during e-commerce transactions

Another important trend is live streaming and the stronger influence of influencers Due to everything we experienced privately and professionally in the previous year 2023, and due to the global need to save jobs and companies, it was necessary to find a quick and simple way to compensate for the lack of face-to-face communication streets. Thus, live streams, i.e. live broadcasts and any form of video content in general, experienced an expansion.

The live stream was used for personal communication with family and friends, for entertainment and various forms of education, for sightseeing, fitness training, and cultural events. Together led to the fact that live views on the Facebook platform increased by 50%, on Instagram by 70%, while the youngest social platform TikTok was further popularized.

This fusion has proven to be very powerful and profitable, and by all accounts, this growth will continue through 2023. In particular, Amazon Live has seen incredible success.

The third trend is Video marketing, almost every text in the field of digital marketing from the year 2019, predicts the near future and trends in this no. anshi, in each you will find - video marketing. That all this is not without reason is evidenced by the incredible statistics from 2023, which say the following:

- 70% of consumers have shared a video of a brand, brand, or destination they like on social networks,
- 72% of businesses say video has improved conversion rates,
- 52% of consumers say that watching videos makes them feel more confident and helps them make decisions about where to visit or buy online,
- 65% of users visit the merchant's website after watching the video content, and 39% call the supplier immediately after watching the video.

There are many reasons why video content is so popular. First of all, it engages all the senses, and provided that all the elements of the video are skilfully edited and that the script and performance are integrated and up to the task - the viewer will be delighted. It's fun and practical at the same time. You can watch videos anywhere and anytime, with or without sound.

The fourth trend, is voice and visual search, this "contactless" type of search query is fun and necessary for people who for health reasons cannot access it conventionally. Pages that support voice and visual search will surely have a bright future, and Google will not be immune to that either. As of 2017, 50% of all searches are voice-enabled, just like visual search. Instead of endless browsing, users have switched to a simpler more accessible way. They search by phrase or by uploading a photo of the product they want to buy. According to the MTA, the main reason for the change is that such a search provides users with a more engaging and personalized experience.

It makes it easier to navigate and find more information about a product or service before making a final purchase.

At the same time, it will contribute to higher conversion and profitability of the website. Some believe that sites that support voice and visual search could increase digital sales revenue by as much as 30%.

The fifth trend is, a transparent and open approach, as I have already said several times, consumers and customers are not at all naive and will not trust you just like that. People generally want more for their money. They want added value. Quality relationships built on mutual respect will be one of the main trends in di-

gital marketing in 2023. Many were burned in various ways; paying for damaged products, for non-functioning products, etc. With online competition growing every day, no detail, no matter how small, is less important.

The essence of transparency is open communication and responsibility towards the customer. Because of all the changes the world is going through, transparency is more important than ever. Caring for people, that is, the customer, is more important than ever. Marketing campaigns that advocate for the common good, the preservation of human values and health, as well as concrete action and public support of social activities.

When it comes to smaller companies, the same rule applies - constant flexibility and adaptation to the target group, and finding ways for quality communication that will build customer trust.

The sixth trend is content that is easy to consume, this means carefully designing content that does not strain the eyes or the mind but intrigues and attracts. If it is a question of written content, it is clearly and concisely divided into subheadings, and it is readable and understandable. No one has the will or desire to waste time with boring texts, especially if they are written in a laborious style and with an interface that looks unprofessional.

Trend seven is personalization, perhaps because it is often impossible to satisfy all the needs of an individual within a certain target group, and for the past few years, the global social trend has been to support and express individuality in every sense, personalized marketing campaigns will also "target" individuals. Mass is no longer popular, and will probably be so in the future. Marketing campaigns designed according to the principle of individuality, and to some extent the feeling of uniqueness and appreciation are one of the more significant trends in digital marketing in 2023.

Trend eight, is user experience, consumers, customers, visitors...everyone wants quality user experience, that is, quality service. If, for example, they visit the site just to get information about something, or read an article on a topic they are interested in, the site must load quickly, be mobile-friendly, clear, easy to navigate, and pleasing to the eye. Anything worse, today with so much competition and the Google algorithm, will not bring more visits.

Globally, consumers want a pleasant vacation - recreation experience, to convince them that they are spending money in the right place and not spending it in vain. Most customers today want to know what and who offers coffee service and are likely to research you before paying. If they've had a particularly negative experience, they can't wait to "cheer up" you on a forum, group, etc. Negative publicity is better than no publicity at all, so you certainly don't need it. This is why your lead takes care of its current and future clients. Answer their questions, and talk to them openly.

Trend, E-mail marketing, one of the oldest forms of digital marketing is email marketing. It is also the most expensive, the most personal, but the most complete. Although it seems to many that the time of email marketing has passed, this is not true. According to American studies, for every money invested in e-mail marketing, 42 dollars is returned to each address, which when it comes to ROI is 4200%. Well-thought-out email marketing will help more than any other channel.

Here I underline that it is necessary to carefully analyze the market and create an adequate strategy. Today, this means that you segment your e-mail list based on certain specifications, and then personalize the contents of the e-mail.

Trend ten, innovative partnerships, the joining of two or more corporations is not a discovery of this time, nor digital marketing. It is an established business practice that is done for mutual benefit. More often, for the reason that a stronger corporation would push a weaker one, to exchange experiences and clients, or to join forces to enter a highly competitive market. All this is applicable in the digital world as well. Depending on what you do and how "strong" you are in your industry, you can conclude a partnership with a corporation that will show your business activity in a new and more accessible light. Finally, the promotion of the environmental protection trend, awareness of environmental preservation, an ecological and more humane approach to every segment of product creation, and a generally responsible approach to the entire process have grown so much in recent years that even 81% of consumers believe that companies should make their contribution to preserving the environment. Montenegro does this segment very poorly and poorly.

From what has been said, it follows that Montenegro must recognize investments in marketing activities, and investments in ICT as investments that will materialize in the long term through an increase in income, and not as an expense because it can also realize the mission, vision, and strategic goals of tourism development.

Having digital skills has become a necessity in the era of modern technologies and the digitalization of society and the economy. They are defined as skills to use digital devices, communication applications, and networks to access information (Unesco, 2018). Constant business changes caused by ICT require that employees must keep up with them. Basic digital skills imply having the necessary knowledge and skills for the use of digital devices and applications, while advanced include a range of abilities that allow individuals to use more complex digital technologies, more complex software, and tools. Contemporary society dictates new trends, and these skills become one of the accepted qualifications for quality education, employment, and the functioning of the economy.

According to the "Survey on European Skills and Jobs", about 85% of all jobs in the EU require the possession of at least basic digital skills (Cedefop, 2018). In all sectors of the economy, survival in the labor market requires an appropriate combination of these digital skills with other, cognitive skills, such as problem-solving, creativity, communication, and collaboration capabilities. New digital technologies have massively impacted jobs and skills in the tourism industry, including digital platforms, virtual reality, augmented reality, artificial intelligence, and big data, and the need for people with the skills to operate in such an environment is evident.

As stated in the OECD report Preparing the Tourism Workforce for the Digital Future (2021), a survey was conducted in 2019 by the Next Tourism Generation Alliance (NTG) which aimed to show the current state and possible future levels of digital skills that will be required of the workforce in this area. Research has shown that the tourism sector will require the possession and mass use of digital skills in the future.

Furthermore, the analysis showed that tourism organizations believe that digital skills are of great importance for the functioning of this sector of the economy, and employees are willing to work in environments where technology plays a major role. However, the NTG states that there is a lot of room for improvement when it comes to the digital skills of employees, and one of the conclusions is that advanced digital skills will be necessary due to the high degree of automation and the use of specific computer software. The crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic has affected the tourism business system and worldwide this industry has faced one of the most devastating crises of modern times. In addition, the pandemic has put digital skills first when it comes to the survival of the economy and jobs, so it can be safely said that it has significantly deepened the differences in the lack of the truth that individuals possess, especially employees in the tourism sector and other service activities, who suffered the most in moments of complete suspension of work and jobs (Carlisle et al., 2020).

Due to all of the above, it is necessary to measure the digital skills of employees in tourism, through which one would gain a clear insight into the possession of skills that are necessary for higher quality business. If tourism and hospitality employees have sufficient digital skills that their workplace requires, they will be able to be more productive and efficient (Erdogan et al., 2011). On the other hand, if the employees in this sector have digital skills that are below the required level for their job position, there may be reduced economic efficiency and productivity, and they must undergo certain training.

Conclusion

The rapid development of the Internet and digital marketing in general requires constant monitoring of market trends, adaptation to dynamic changes in the environment, and the use of new marketing tools and techniques. The spectrum of digital channels and tools is extremely wide, but regardless of which one is used, one must start from the starting point on which any type of promotional activity is based, which is a message that must be harmonized with the nature and characteristics of the destination itself, as well as with the wishes, needs, and expectations of defined target groups.

The internet and digital marketing in general have many advantages. It allows addressing target groups that can be reached according to different criteria, more efficient introduction of new products and services, the possibility of mutual interaction and communication with recipients, getting quick feedback, the possibility of creating a base of potential users, the costs are relatively low compared to traditional marketing.

It should be remembered that the information transmitted through digital media channels is very fast and reaches a large number of users in a short time and mistakes are expensive and hard to forgive. In other words, the use of digital tools is a complex process that requires a serious and careful approach and proper strategic planning, to which special attention should be paid - first, by developing an appropriate strategy for the digital marketing of tourism in Montenegro and determining the main goals to be achieved, identifying the main activities and measures that should be implemented to achieve the set goals, the development of an action plan with clearly defined vectors of all planned activities and deadlines for their implementation and, of course, appropriate monitoring and evaluation of all implemented activities, only in this way tested and implemented digital marketing can contribute to the achievement of the strategic goals of each destination.

Montenegro still has not seen the advantages that digital tools can offer destinations in terms of creating a recognizable image and positioning on the global tourist market, and this should be the main priority in future promotional activities.

Social networks are a trend that has been present on the world market for years, but unfortunately, in this area too, we lag behind the world's most developed tourist destinations. Considering the current market trends and developments, as well as the fact that we live in an era in which the digitization process progresses very quickly, it is clear that social networks play an important role in all areas not

only of business but also of everyday life. Therefore, it is quite logical that this trend is also present in tourism.

It is for this reason that many developed tourist destinations have been developing the concept of appearing on social networks and providing appropriate content for each of the social networks for years, in any case, it must not be forgotten that the concept of all these networks is different, and more broadly, they are aimed at different targets groups.

As far as our country is concerned, the recommendations are based on the fact that we must replace the "3S" concept on which our tourist offer is based with the "3E" concept and work more intensively on the diversification of the tourist offer and the creation of new tourist products and services, as well as the development of forms of tourism that will enable us to develop more sustainable tourism - mainly winter, mountain, rural, sports, health, adventure tourism, etc. It is necessary to stop the destruction of national parks and in the coming period to develop tourism so that it is connected as much as possible with the development of production and agriculture. Montenegro has a unique potential to become a quality year-round destination with a recognizable image on the market. However, what we currently offer is mass tourism, the "3S" concept, which is based on the offer of sun, sea, and sand (Jakšić Stojanović 2015). This kind of tourist product is not able to solve any of the basic problems, and I mean above all the uneven spatial and temporal distribution of tourist traffic, the distinctly clear seasonal nature of the tourist offer, etc.

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