

Integrated marketing communication in tourism – an analysis. Case study: Muntenia and Oltenia

Aurelia-Felicia STĂNCIOIU

The Bucharest University of Economic Studies
stancioiufelicia@hotmail.com

Andreea BOTOȘ

The Bucharest University of Economic Studies
andreea_botos@yahoo.com

Mihai ORZAN

The Bucharest University of Economic Studies
mihai.orzan@ase.ro

Ion PÂRGARU

Polytechnic University of Bucharest
pargaruion@yahoo.com

Octavian ARSENE

The Bucharest University of Economic Studies
oarsene@yahoo.com

Abstract. *The multitude of factors interfering in the process of image formation and the way in which they act in a unique combination, similar to a genetic code for a consumer, influences the image study of a tourism destination in the direction of becoming a complex process. In the marketing activity of each destination, the analysis of the importance of destination's resources represents an essential step, however, as the multifaceted tourism product presents (in combination with, as well as through other policies – price, distribution etc.) a strong diversification, the distinction between the real, objective situation of the destination's resources and the lack of their communication, on the one hand, and the distinction between the real situation and the way in which the resources are "presented" (in the direction of maximising or minimising them), on*

the other hand, can constitute a barrier in the path of formulating and/or fulfilling the marketing objectives and, respectively, the communication ones. In this context, in the authors' opinion, in aid of a positioning strategy as accurate as possible – starting point in the integrated marketing communication strategy, a radiography of the tourism resources, their place and their reflection, in relation to those communicated through the different promotional instruments (examples, books, guides, online tourism agencies, social media etc.), is permanently imposed, all the more in the case of a macrodestination like Romania, and should be carefully monitorised.

Keywords: communication; integrated marketing communication; promotion; Muntenia and Oltenia.

JEL Codes: M31; L83.

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Introduction

The communication of the elements of a tourism product to the target public represents a difficult task (mainly because of its complexity); this fact applies even more to Romania – as a macrodestination, which allows practicing the majority of the types of tourism, addressing implicitly to a large number of market segments with different necessities and sophistication degrees of desires and preferences. Thus, based on a complex buying decision process, it is necessary that the elements of the tourism product are communicated through a large number of promotional instruments, in the same time, relevant for the consumers, with which they should have contact from the moment they wish to visit a destination, until the end of the consuming act (including purchasing souvenirs, promotional objects, which may act as a stimulus for repeating the touristic experience). In the case of Romania, as a macrodestination, it is necessary that the marketing communication actions have a unique concept at the basis, integrated and subordinated to its marketing objective, so as each microdestination should have an image as consistent and coherent as possible.

Conceptual frame

Integrated marketing communication represents the planning, creation, integration and implementation of all contact points which a consumer has with a certain brand, as potential distribution channels, for messages which may influence directly or indirectly the purchasing process (Shimp, 2010, p. 10). Therefore, it is important to study the specificity of the communicated information through each channel, also correlated with the interests of the annunciator (for example, information, persuasion etc.). The information volume regarding the component elements of a tourism product (for example, natural, cultural resources etc.) is directly proportional to its complexity, the potential customer being able to register information from a diversified range of means, in the domain of marketing, and also in other domains (for example, geography, history, biology, religion etc.). The latter are difficult to analyze or control because of the experiences acquired by the potential consumer during the lifetime, being able to be “marked” partially or totally by culture, social class, reference group, role and status of the consumer in the society. Nevertheless, the sources from the marketing area may reveal information that reach the consumer more accurately, indicating, depending on the consumer’s means of “filtration”, the main lines of the integrated communication policy for a destination, policy attained by the “efforts (of all involved supporters), that have a certain communicational capital, which pursues to capitalize it within some coherent steps – on a commercial plan, as well as on a corporative plan,

so as to favour the reaching of the objectives provided in the marketing plans” (Popescu, 2003, p. 26).

Such a rigorous analysis, in which a large range of communication channels is taken into account, has as key-point the common elements of the presented information, especially the differences of structure, but also of nuance. The more pronounced these differences are, the more the complete image shall diminish, so that consumers will tend to retain a limited volume of information concerning the destination (not necessarily representative from a marketing point of view), but which they consider to be representative for the purchase of the tourism product/of the tourism destination. This information will reflect exactly in the destination’s positioning elements; that is why their dilution or annexation to information less representative may damage the image formation – part of the mental process – and it can even influence a possible purchase of a tourism product/destination.

Operational frame

The analysis of the communication instruments used for the promotion of the two tourism destinations, Muntenia and Oltenia, has been achieved, according to Philip Kotler’s theory, starting from the three problems that need to be solved by a communication strategy, namely: the strategy of the message, the creative strategy (the efficient way by which the message is sent) and the source of the message (Kotler, Keller, 2012, p. 484). Therefore, the mix of the marketing communication has been analyzed, starting with advertising, illustrated in this case by the analysis of the advertising materials (circulation brochures); of main interest are the promoted resources of the two analyzed destinations, Muntenia and Oltenia, the means by which they have been promoted and their variation, within advertising, and also in the case of the other elements of communication (adaptation after Kotler, Keller, 2012, p. 491). From the existent materials, the most representative brochures have been selected⁽¹⁾, namely: *General Brochure 2012, Cities from România, Nature and Cultural România* brochures, following the analysis of the promoted destinations of each region, from the point of view of attractions presented as elements of the tourism product, and implicitly, of the practiced/practicable types of tourism.

Therefore, regarding Muntenia region, the most promoted city – Bucharest, also called “Little Paris” and the “city of contrasts” due to its architecture – is mainly presented as being a *cultural, urban destination* owing to the buildings and important monuments (for example, The Old Princely Court, Palace of Parliament, Village Museum, Romanian Peasant Museum, History Museum, “Grigore Antipa” Museum etc.) and parks (Cișmigiu and Herăstrău) with a historical past. For a clearer positioning, each of these

attractions is presented as being a landmark or a superlative in relation to reference attractions from the same category (for example, Village Museum is presented as being the largest museum of this type in Europe, the Palace of Parliament as being a building with the stature similar to the Pentagon, the Art Museum as being the host of Brâncuși works of art, the Antipa Museum, the one having the largest exponent, a prehistoric elephant of 4.5 meters, Herăstrău as being the largest park of Bucharest and Cișmigiu as being the oldest park in Bucharest, whose architect had designed the Imperial Gardens of Wien as well). Through these elements, the city of Bucharest is described, and thus located, through the similarities and differences related to other European capitals, well-known as tourism destinations. The borders of the destination are extended by the presentation of the surroundings of the city, with attractions for the cultural tourism (for example, the palace built in Brâncovenesc style located in Mogoșoaia, the Monasteries of Snagov, Pasărea, Căldărușani – with their rich collection of medieval art and Cernica, well-known for the pilgrimage to Saint Calinic) and for its active tourism (for example, Snagov Lake).

Comana, the “Hidden Delta” close to Bucharest, is presented as a cultural and ecotouristic destination, while in Comana Natural Park, the endemic flora at the national level can be found, as well as floristic reservations which are unique in Romania. Another well-represented destination from Muntenia is Valea Prahovei; in all the brochures, the main cultural objective is Sinaia with Peleş Castle – a masterpiece of German Renaissance, followed by Sinaia Monastery, which includes the first religious museum in Romania, built by the end of 19th century and the Casino – a symbol of the city. Valea Teleajănelui is presented as a cultural, mountain-based and health destination, by means of three of its most important localities: Vălenii de Munte, Cheia and Slănic Prahova, where there is the largest salt exploitation center. Bucegi Mountains and Bucegi Natural Park are represented as being speleology, ecotouristic and active-tourism destinations because of their natural attractions/natural patrimony (for example, the chamois, brown bear and lynx).

In Dâmbovița county, Târgoviște city, presented as the oldest princely residence, according to the brochures, is the main tourism destination, with its most important attractions, among which: the Royal Court, Chindiei Tower and Sf. Vineri Church, that outline the practice of cultural, religious and urban tourism. Buzău county, destination for the active, gastronomic tourism and ecotourism (main gastronomic elements: Pleșcoi sausages and Fetească Neagră) is represented by Mud Volcanoes, with its sulfurous soil, rich in salt, with rare species of plants protected by law.

In Argeș county there are presented – as practicable types of tourism – speleology tourism in Dâmbovicioara Cave, cultural tourism on Transfăgărășan, at the Curtea de Argeș Monastery and at Poienari Fortress, marked, in

brochures, by the legend of master Manole, respectively by the historical figure of Vlad Țepeș. The mountain-based tourism, ecotourism and rural tourism are represented by Făgăraș Mountains, with the highest peak in Romania and the National Park Piatra Craiului, where the unique endemic flora can be found as well as species from the red list of the International Union for Nature Preservation. Therefore, in the case of Muntenia, certain combinations of types of tourism exist, as a consequence of the diversified needs of the consumers and as a premise for a complex tourism product, among which Prahova county – as destination for the cultural and mountain-based tourism – and Buzău and Argeș counties – for active tourism, ecotourism and cultural tourism.

Muntenia, represented in detail in the *guides*, has as main microdestination Bucharest, “*bridge between the Orient and Occident*” (*Michelin Guide*), city to which a large volume of information is assigned, from the area of tourist attractions, itineraries (with the main areas of interest: Old Bucharest – Civic Center, Revolution Square, University Square, Grădina Icoanei District, the great boulevards, the historical center, Calea Victoriei, Cișmigiu and Herăstrău Parks), and many historical landmarks gravitating around the figures of Bucur, Vlad Țepeș and Ion Mincu. Although the detailing degree is relatively low (for example, the presence of a single promoted event, George Enescu Festival), it emerges from the information presented in the brochures the fact that the destinations represent real “structures”, in which the combination of natural and socio-cultural resources render the combination of the types of tourism, and, implicitly, offers complexity and relevance to the destination.

Valea Prahovei, a destination with mixed forests, spectacular mountains associated to “*romantic souls and adventurous explorers*” (*National Geographic Guide*), is also carefully presented in guides with itineraries containing: Câmpina, Sinaia, Bușteni. Târgoviște is presented as a cultural city, with a Wallachian architecture from the 16th century and an appealing panorama of the city, as well as of the surrounding rural area, with the main attractions: the Royal Court, the Royal Church, Chindiei Tower, Sf. Vineri Church, Bălașa House, Art Museum, Stelea Monastery, Stelea Galleries, while Curtea de Argeș is depicted as the former capital of Muntenia with a mixture of styles – Romanian, Oriental, Byzantine, Caucasian, Balkanic, Occidental, with limestone walls, in Byzantine style, dominated by the figure of Neagoe Basarab and by the legend of master Manole.

The region of Oltenia is presented in *brochures* as a rich ethnographic area with natural beauties and ambitious, spirited and humorous inhabitants, marked by the historical figures of Mihai Viteazul, Nicolae Titulescu and Constantin Brâncoveanu, one of the main cultural resources being “Călușul”, a popular dance included on the list of the world material cultural patrimony of

UNESCO. Târgu Jiu (Gorj county) and even Dolj county have as positioning element the works of art of Constantin Brâncuși, while Mehedinți county, with its protected areas, such as “Porțile de Fier” Natural Park and Mehedinți Geopark, contains humid areas, which shelter internationally protected bird species, maintaining the active tourism, speleology and ecotourism. Vâlcea county is also represented by a triad of types of tourism, namely cultural tourism, through Hurezi Monastery – UNESCO monument, Arutela, Cozia Monastery, Măldărăști fortified manors, health tourism – Călimănești-Căciulata resort and ecotourism – Buila-Vânturarița National Park.

Concerning the *guides*, as an information instrument and, respectively, promotion instrument, Oltenia, described as “*having inaccessible cliffs, forested valleys, isolated monasteries, alluring beauty, under the influence of the traditions’ keepers*” (*National Geographic Guide*), was mainly presented through the monasteries, in all studied guides existing religious routes (for example, Cozia Monastery – to the balneotherapy resorts of Căciulata, Călimănești, to Râmnicu Vâlcea or Govora Monastery, mainly known for the printing and iconostasis, Dintr-un Lemn Monastery, Bistrița Monastery, Arnota Monastery, Horezu Monastery – masterwork of the Wallachian princes). The main presented cities are Târgu Jiu, with the most representative component of the tourism product – Constantin Brâncuși and his works of art and Drobeta-Turnu Severin, where Șimian Island, cruises on the Danube and the vestiges of Ada Kaleh Island have been presented. As differentiating elements of the region, the popular architecture has been presented as “trace” of the richness of the 18th and 19th centuries, its essence being rendered by the phrase “*stone and faith*” (*Michelin Guide*). Also, Râmnicu Vâlcea has been presented, insisting on Olt – “*tamed by a series of dams and viaducts, customs and fairs of Oltenia*” (*Rough Guides*) and on the routes towards Călimănești-Căciulata and Cozia-Turnu Roșu, with “*a deep, ribboned and very beautiful gullet*” (*Rough Guides*). Craiova is represented as a cultural destination because of the “*unexpected treasures of the city’s fragmented architecture*” (*National Geographic Guide*).

The guides offer complex information, regarding intuitive routes, maps, insisting on activities and interests, on the history of the city, at the same time, realizing a rigorous segmentation, and on photographs representing reference attractions (for example, the façade of the Romanian Athenaeum or Tismana Monastery in Michelin Guide) or tangibility elements (examples: pretzels and jam of Curtea de Argeș).

Regarding the *online environment*, firstly, there have been analyzed the websites of the tourism offices from abroad. Therefore, referring to the one in Spain, Muntenia region has been represented through the destinations: Bucharest, Sinaia and Curtea de Argeș, in the same time missing from the presentation: Târgoviște, Buzău – intensely presented by the previously

analyzed promotion instruments. The capital – a cultural destination, is described as a place situated on an “endless” plain, with old palaces, modern buildings of steel and glass (description that confirms the aforementioned idea of the “city of contrasts”), discreet, but big and wonderful parks with old trees, modern restaurants, enhancing the Village Museum and George Enescu Festival; its representation rendered by the legend of Bucur, the myth of Dromichetes, the figure of Vlad Țepeș Voivode-Dracula is, to a small extent, in accordance with the main attractions. Curtea de Argeș lends itself to cultural tourism according to the Romanian tourism office in Spain, by mentioning the Byzantine and post-Byzantine churches. In Sinaia, “Pearl of the Carpathians”, presented as winter mountain-based destination, with a century tradition and international atmosphere, many ski tracks with different degrees of difficulty can be found, as well as bob tracks, cable cars, teleski for beginners and advanced ski passionates. For the United States, Sinaia is appropriate for cultural tourism, highlighting the picturesque style containing Peleş and Pelișor castles and creating links between Bucharest, Sinaia and Brașov or Bucegi Mountains, in order to elaborate a tourism product. The capital is seen as a part of an European circuit to Budapest, with visits to museums, events, parks and routes to the monasteries of Northern Moldova and to the Castle of Dracula in Târgoviște, a character which does not exist in documents such as guides and brochures. On the same site, a complex route called “Discover Walachia” is proposed (this being the only source that uses this kind of region division) containing: Bucharest, Valea Prahovei, Natural Park of Bucegi, Târgu Jiu, Slănic Prahova, Craiova, Drobeta-Turnu Severin, Târgoviște, Horezu, Curtea de Argeș, Poenari Fortress, the orthodox monasteries in Byzantine style – Arnota, Bistrița, Cozia, Curtea de Argeș, Govora, Hurezi, as well as Drăgășani, Ștefănești, Dealu Mare and Valea Călugărească Vineyards, Azuga, Cozia and Bucegi parks. For Austria, each destination has a clear description, relating to its positioning (for example, Câmpina – “Rich in oil”, Sinaia – “The place where the kings used to go skiing”, Breaza – “Backpacking and Golf”, Bușteni – “The place for the winter sports dedicated to extreme sportspeople”). Destinations that have not been promoted within other instruments and through other marketing channels are Câmpina, Breaza, Comarnic – so as to combine sport tourism with religious tourism and backpacking, in view of creation a complex tourism product.

Oltenia has as main elements in the case of Romania’s tourism office in Spain, the fortified buildings and the monasteries – representing a patrimony, authenticity and tradition element for the tourism office in Austria (for example, the existence of routes in which the religious tourism occupies the main place, completed by the balneotherapy and sport tourism – Hurezi Monastery, Monasteries of Northern Oltenia: Tismana, Dintr-un Lemn, Bistrița, Horezu

Monastery, the native village of Constantin Brâncuși – Hobița, Polovragi Cave, Muierii Cave, Cloșani, Ruins from the Bridge across the Danube, Olt Valley, Drăgășani, Drobeta-Turnu Severin, Călimănești-Căciulata, Băile Olănești, Băile Govora, Cerna Valley, Cozia Park, Mehedinți, Buila-Vânturarița Park, Cozia Monastery, Târgu Jiu).

Although the differences between the pieces of information presented by the different tourism offices from abroad refer to the psychographic and behavioural differences between the consumers from each geographic space, this is not a sufficient motive for losing coherence and consistency of the differentiating elements of Romania, and, implicitly, those of Muntenia and Oltenia.

In order to study the online environment which comes in contact with the Romanian public, there have been selected the main online instruments of communication (Orzan, 2013, p. 24), starting from the important sites of the online tourism agencies, newsletters, online publications, blogs, mobile applications and social media, that have been included in the nominations' final picture of the most recent conference approaching the thematic of on-line tourism, namely E-travel Conference, which took place in Bucharest, on 11.04.2013.

Therefore, regarding Oltenia, there have been presented online reservations systems organizing internal routes in Craiova – Paravion Tour, the tourism destination being presented as “Oltenia’s heart” (examples of tourist attractions: Romanescu Park, Art Museum, architectonic monuments), together with Târgu Jiu (the park with the sculptures of Brâncuși), Horezu, Băile Olănești, Călimănești-Căciulata. In addition, here exist tourism attractions as the famous fortified manors – Greceanu, Duca, Bujoreni, Cernătescu, Tudor Vladimirescu, The Lilac Forest of Ponoare, Podul lui Dumnezeu, Muierii and Topolnița Caves and the monasteries (Arnota, Tismana, Hurezi, Bistrița). The tourism packages include some attractions, activities and destinations individually presented, referring to balneotherapy tourism: “A week of recovery in the balneotherapy resorts 2013”, “Balneotherapy decade”, “Băile Olănești, Călimănești-Căciulata, Băile Govora – Easter, 1st of May”, such packages being found also within the mobile solutions (examples, “Hai la băi”, “Easter in Olănești”).

The agencies promote Oltenia, mainly, through Băile Olănești and Călimănești-Căciulata balneotherapy resorts, offering recovery and wellness programs (for example, Perfect Tour agency). The combination of the types of tourism which may be practiced in Oltenia, namely business tourism (Olt and Dolj counties), balneotherapy-mountain-based tourism and relaxation tourism (guesthouses and hotels) is totally different in comparison to the one presented

in brochures (which includes ecotourism and cultural tourism), this inequality indicating an obvious disparity between resources and sources of information!

The online booking systems regarding Muntenia exclusively concern Bucharest, the country's capital, but the main cities presented in the tourism agencies offers are: Pitești, Buzău, Brăila, Târgoviște, Giurgiu, Slobozia, Bucharest – as destinations for the cultural tourism, Pucioasa and Amara resorts for the balneotherapy tourism, Giurgiu, Călărași and Buzău for recreation tourism. The online agencies propose tourism packages for these types of tourism as well (example, Eximtur's offers in Muntenia: week-end, Easter, ski and winter sports, spa and wellness, balneotherapy-mountain-based packages, "A week of recovery", "Balneotherapy decade", "One week in the mountains", "Holiday in the mountains", "Hai la băi", offers created and generally taken over from other specialized tourism agencies/professional associations and Perfect Tour, which promotes Bucharest destination for practicing cultural tourism, also offering packages as "One week of recovery in the balneotherapy resorts 2013" and "One week in the mountains").

By means of *mobile solutions* for Muntenia, Amara and Pucioasa resorts are promoted for balneotherapy tourism and cultural tourism – by listing the cultural institutions and museums from Bucharest (Orange Explorer), types of tourism yet not supported by the Facebook social media (within its framework, only Bucharest, Sinaia and Târgoviște cities are promoted at a very small scale, the only information offered being the one for accommodation)!

Within the *awarded blogs*, there is a single article focusing on Oltenia – as destination for winter sports, which is not supported by other promotion instruments. Cesăvezi.ro site, representing a platform of tourist attractions, promotes the two studied regions, but there is a significant variation between the attractions presented within the site and those previously studied by of other promotional instruments (example, in the case of Muntenia, Bolintin Forest, Costescu Manor, Gâsca Isle, Argedava Fortress, Râușor Dam and accumulation lake, Lăptici Peatery etc., and in the case of Oltenia, Drobeta Roman Camp, Novac's Balk, Săcele balneotherapy resort, Cheile Bistriței, Preajba-Făcăi lacustrian complex etc.).

Regarding the *audio-visual, media instruments*, combined with the online environment, after the message analysis of the only professional documentary regarding Romania, in the authors' opinion, "Wild Carpathia", made by Charlie Ottey (even though it does not directly concern the two studied regions), the conclusion is that, its message, translated into 21 languages and broadcasted in 130 countries, is extremely important, because:

- it is broadcasted by Travel – international television channel, the first record on Youtube network counting over 200,000 visualizations;

▪ the central element of the documentary is represented by the wildlife of the Carpathian Mountains, by the beauty of its sublime landscapes; the main physical resources are represented by unexploited places in wild ecosystems, forests and meadows of untouched daffodils, unaltered flora and fauna, while the social and cultural resources presented (old traditions and customs, rudimentary lifestyle, folk costumes, dances and crafts) reside at the basis of the image that the documentary's creators envisioned.

However, it is important to investigate not only if these elements characterize Romania to a certain extent, by putting its real image in an appropriate frame, but also if they really define it, in tourism terms, as central elements for the construction of its brand! In other words, Romania's induced position – “golden land, wild heaven” – which indicates the active tourism, adventure tourism and cultural tourism – seen unilaterally as being representative as types of tourism for Romania, does not reflect the true unique resources of Romania!

Consequently, under the conditions in which there are no such professional documentaries for the other microdestinations of Romania as well (Muntenia, Oltenia, Maramureş, Bucovina, Banat-Crişana and Dobrogea) the over-dimensioning of the “terrestrial paradise” and of that of the “untouched beauty” from Transylvania inevitably leads to a sub-dimensioning of the country's real image, after a certain period of time of visiting Romania, involving the risk of a sustained „demarketing” of the country, respectively of the component microdestinations and implicitly, of its tourism brand.

Results

In order to test the hypotheses represented by the key-points of integrated marketing communication in the specialized literature, namely the consistency, the coherence of the message and the specificity of the communication channels, its final phase aiming to identify, for each destination of the studied regions, its specificity, expressed by the presented tourist attractions, by the purpose rendered by specific and/or preponderant form of tourism which can be practiced and implicitly, of the targeted segments of consumers, by decrypting the interests residing at the basis of a holiday selection. It is necessary that all these elements are analyzed, envisioning the specificity of the utilised communication channel indicating a certain variation of information; yet, it is necessary that the situation analysis of the communication means at a certain moment should reflect a clear, unitary and powerful image of the destinations and regions.

With respect to Bucharest (the most intensely promoted destination from Muntenia), it can be noticed the fact that the offline means indicate an

exclusively cultural destination, within whose “circuits” are created according to specific areas, covering a large range of tourist attractions, such as historical buildings, churches and monasteries (Table 1). As the guides represent communication means destined to a certain category of potential tourists and namely, those who are passionate about knowledge (presuming to make a buying decision for a planned holiday), they present, within a detailed historical frame, the most numerous indexes regarding the segments of consumers to whom Bucharest addresses, meaning: persons passionate about culture, arts, collectors etc. Furthermore, due to the relevance and integrity of the source, a significant number of the superlatives of the destination is presented by this communication means (examples, “Grigore Antipa” Museum, National History Museum of Romania, Village Museum, Palace of Parliament, Snagov). The cultural tourism product is supplemented in brochures, by practicing active and religious tourism within the surroundings of the city, the visit to Snagov Lake, respectively to Snagov, Căldărușani and Mogoșoaia monasteries etc. Contrary to the principles of integrated marketing communication, through the online instruments, Bucharest destination (not supported at the tourism fairs) is mainly presented as being a destination for spa and events tourism (which may be to a certain extent explainable, considering the dynamic nature and rapidity with which events generally develop), the cultural tourism being presented only as an alternative to these two main types of tourism!

Prahova Valley is also presented in guides and brochures as being a cultural destination, with its main attractions: Peleş and Pelișor castles and Sinaia Monastery (well-represented at the tourism fairs), “supplemented” by Azuga and Bușteni resorts for tourists who have an increased interest for mountain-based activities, destinations where they can practice sport and mountain-based tourism. Covering a large range of activities, the brochures present in Prahova county – Bucegi Natural Park – a destination that is favourable for speleology tourism, in combination with active tourism and mountain-based tourism. These three adjacent types of tourism converge to a compact segment of consumers and form a scale of diversified activities, along with health tourism (Slănic Prahova) and complementary activities that position Prahova county, but also Prahova Valley, among the most representative, complex destinations (exceeding the strict area of mountain-based tourism presented in the online environment) of Muntenia region.

Buzău destination is also presented as being a rural destination (by Tisău, Haleș villages) in guides and in the online environment (where the accommodation services are not specific to the practiced/practicable types of tourism). The active tourism, simultaneously with the ecotourism and the mountain-based tourism (on the background of practicing cultural tourism) may be practiced separately or combined.

Curtea de Argeş combines, by means of guides and brochures, multiple types of tourism such as cultural, religious and speleology tourism, by proposing visits to the tourist attractions: Curtea de Argeş Monastery, Poenari Fortress, Dâmbovicioarei Cave, Sân Nicoară Church, Transfăgărăşan, tourists passionate about nature having the opportunity to visit Piatra Craiului National Park and Făgăraş Mountains in order to practice ecotourism, rural tourism, as well as mountain-based tourism. The rural tourism in the area of Curtea de Argeş is well-represented in guides by the presentation of Arefu Village, equally having a considerable visibility at the tourism fairs.

Târgovişte city, presented in guides and brochures in a unitary manner, as a destination for cultural and religious tourism (by visiting the museums, Dealu Monastery and the Royal Court), has also a rural importance (represented by Viforâta Village, exclusively presented in the most complete instrument of communication – guides).

In order to highlight the lack of consistency between the two types of communication – online and offline – it should be noticed the fact that important destinations for balneotherapy tourism in Muntenia – Amara and Pucioasa, are not at all mentioned in the written instruments (guides and brochures), even though they have a reasonable visibility at the tourism fairs as well!

In Oltenia, Târgu Jiu is the best-represented destination (by means of Constantin Brâncuşi figure), the region being presented in all the offline communications channels as a cultural destination and supported (as a destination with religious valence) in guides and brochures by attractions such as Tismana Monastery, Horezu, Polovragi, Măldărăşti, Podul lui Dumnezeu, many of these representing superlatives of Romania.

Another destination from Oltenia, considered “complete” in the authors’ opinion, in the offline environment, is Drobeta-Turnu Severin (considered a superlative of Romania, as well), presented in guides and brochures as being a cultural destination, with attractions such as, Şimian Island (with the vestiges of Ada Kaleh Island), Porţile de Fier, Roman Bridge, but also Cazanele Dunării – visible destination at the tourism fairs. However, in the online environment, the cultural potential of the destination occupies a subsidiary place, due to its presentation mainly as a business tourism destination!

Even if it is not promoted in the online environment (important cities such as Craiova, not being presented as having a significant tourism potential, especially for cultural tourism), Oltenia remains a powerful destination in tourism terms, presented to a certain extent as a “hard-set” destination with powerful local brands, due to the differentiating elements on its territory that grant its identity (such as monasteries, which in guides and brochures were highlighted, with the main route: Cozia and Govora monasteries, Dintr-un Lemn Monastery, Bistriţa,

Arnota and Horezu monasteries), contrary to Muntenia – a more “fragmented” destination, with many local identity elements as well.

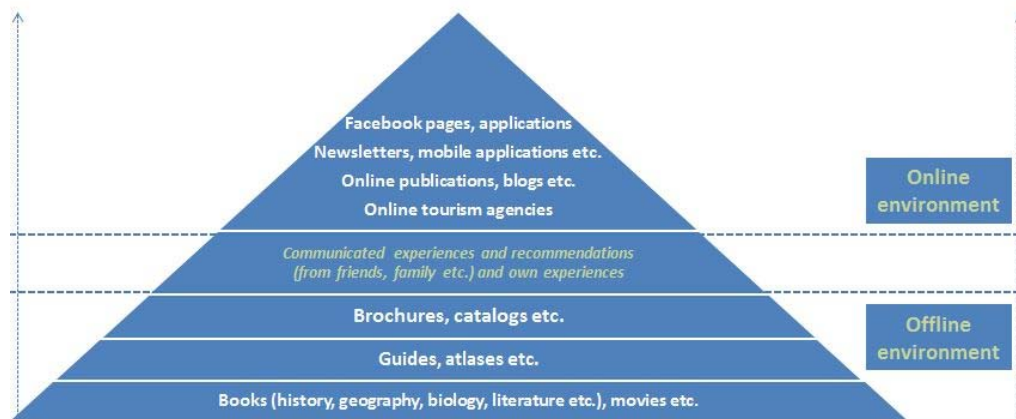


Figure 1. *The hierarchy of information sources, influences and considerations in selecting a destination*

As there is a clear inconsistency between the various information sources, starting from the communication in the offline and online environments, the authors have considered that it is necessary to classify them according to the importance they have within the environment they are part of; thus, starting from the basis of the decision-making pyramid in the case of a tourism product – Figure 1 – the role of information sources such as: history, geography, biology, literature books etc., movies, guides, atlases, brochures and catalogs is to fundament the information, along which – those from other sources, such as online tourism agencies, online publications, newsletters, blogs, mobile applications and Facebook pages and applications – delineate the respective choice.

The main problem of the communication for this region, which transcends the lack of uniformity of distinctive elements, is the deficient representation of primary destinations, important in terms of region resources, such as Băile Olănești (considered in the offline environment, a superlative of Romania). Similar destinations, such as, Băile Govora and Călimănești-Căciulata are placed in a subsidiary background, even though, regarded through balneotherapy tourism perspective, they represent uniqueness elements of the region!

For both destinations, the two offline communication instruments are presented (Table 1), deemed, from the perspective of a vacation selection decision, to be the most important, and which, due to their argumentative profile, impose a continuous “filtering” and “draught”.

Table 1

Synoptic table of the written communication means (guides and brochures) of the tourist attractions and types of tourism from Muntenia and Oltenia destinations.

Muntenia	Oltenia
Offline environment	
Guides	
<i>Bucharest</i>	<i>Oltenia</i>
<p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> historical buildings, churches, monasteries, parks <i>Types of tourism:</i> cultural, religious, urban tourism <i>Segment of consumers:</i> art collectors, children, people who are passionate about sports and pilgrimages (Michelin Guide, Le Guide du Routard, National Geographic Guide, Rough Guides)</p> <p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> surroundings of Bucharest – Mogoșoaia, Căldărușani, Snagov Monasteries <i>Types of tourism:</i> religious, cultural, urban tourism (Michelin Guide, Le Guide du Routard, Rough Guides)</p>	<p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> monasteries (Cozia, Govora, Dintr-un Lemn, Bistrița, Arnota, Hurezi, Tismana), Brâncuși (Târgu Jiu), Vaideeni, Polovragi – Polovragi Cave, Muierii Cave, Baia de Fier <i>Types of tourism:</i> cultural, active, religious, speleology tourism (Michelin Guide, National Geographic Guide)</p>
<i>Ploiești, Teleajăn Valley</i>	<i>Craiova</i>
<p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> museums, Slănic Prahova <i>Types of tourism:</i> cultural, health tourism (Michelin guide, Rough Guides)</p>	<p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> Art Museum, Romanescu Park <i>Types of tourism:</i> cultural, urban tourism (Michelin Guide, National Geographic Guide, Rough Guides)</p>
<i>Valea Prahovei</i>	<i>Târgu Jiu</i>
<p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> Sinaia - Peleş Castle, Bucegi Mountains <i>Types of tourism:</i> cultural, mountain, active tourism, ecotourism (Michelin Guide)</p> <p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> Sinaia – Quota 1400, Azuga, Bușteni <i>Types of tourism:</i> cultural, mountain-based, sports tourism (National Geographic Guide)</p>	<p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> Brâncuși ensemble, Tismana Monastery, Horezu, Polovragi, Măldărăști, Podul lui Dumnezeu <i>Types of tourism:</i> cultural tourism, ecotourism (National Geographic Guide, Rough Guides)</p>
<i>Târgoviște</i>	<i>Drobeta-Turnu Severin</i>
<p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> museums, Dealu Monastery, Royal Court <i>Types of tourism:</i> cultural, religious tourism (Michelin Guide, Ghidul National Geographic, Rough Guides)</p> <p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> Viforâta Village <i>Type of tourism:</i> rural tourism (Michelin Guide)</p>	<p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> Șimian Island, museums, Porțile de Fier, Roman Bridge, Ada Kaleh <i>Type of tourism:</i> cultural tourism (National Geographic Guide, Rough Guides)</p>
<i>Buzău County</i>	
<p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> Mud Volcanoes, Ciolanu and Colți monasteries, Tisău and Haleș villages <i>Types of tourism:</i> cultural, rural tourism (Michelin Guide)</p>	
<i>Curtea de Argeș</i>	
<p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> museums, churches, Transfăgărășan, Vidraru Dam <i>Types of tourism:</i> cultural, religious tourism (Michelin Guide, Le Guide du Routard, National Geographic Guide, Rough Guides)</p>	

Muntenia	Oltenia
Offline environment	
Guides	
<p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> Iezer Mountains (views, villages, monasteries) <i>Types of tourism:</i> cultural, religious tourism (National Geographic Guide)</p> <p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> Arefu Village, Poenari Fortress, Vidraru Lake <i>Types of tourism:</i> cultural, rural tourism (Rough Guides)</p>	
Brochures	
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Bucharest</i></p> <p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> historical monuments <i>Types of tourism:</i> cultural tourism, urban tourism (Cities of România Brochure, General Brochure 2012, Cultural Romania Brochure)</p> <p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> Snagov Lake <i>Type of tourism:</i> active tourism (General Brochure 2012)</p> <p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> surroundings of Bucharest <i>Types of tourism:</i> religious, cultural tourism (Cities from Romania Brochure, General Brochure 2012)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Vâlcea county</i></p> <p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> Horezu, Cule from Măldărăști, Arutela Roman Camp <i>Type of tourism:</i> cultural tourism (General Brochure 2012)</p> <p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> Călimănești-Căciulata <i>Type of tourism:</i> health tourism (General Brochure 2012)</p> <p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> Cozia Monastery <i>Types of tourism:</i> cultural, religious tourism (Cultural Romania Brochure)</p> <p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> Căpățâni Mountains, Buila-Vânturarița National Park <i>Types of tourism:</i> mountain-based tourism, ecotourism, active tourism (General Brochure 2012)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Prahova county</i></p> <p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> Prahova Valley – Sinaia with Peleş, Peleş castles, Sinaia Monastery <i>Types of tourism:</i> cultural, religious tourism (Cultural Romania Brochure, Cities from Romania Brochure)</p> <p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> Bucegi National Park <i>Types of tourism:</i> active, mountain-based, speleology tourism (Natura Brochure, General Brochure 2012)</p> <p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> Teleajăn Valley – Vălenii de Munte, Slănic Prahova, Cheia <i>Types of tourism:</i> cultural, mountain-based, health tourism (General Brochure 2012)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Gorj county</i></p> <p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> Târgu Jiu –Brâncuși ensemble <i>Types of tourism:</i> cultural, urban tourism (General Brochure 2012)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Buzău county</i></p> <p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> Mud Volcanoes <i>Types of tourism:</i> cultural, active tourism, ecotourism, mountain-based tourism (General Brochure 2012)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Mehedinți county</i></p> <p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> Ponoare, Podul lui Dumnezeu <i>Types of tourism:</i> active, speleology tourism (Nature Brochure)</p> <p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> Porțile de Fier National Park</p>

Muntenia	Oltenia
Offline environment	
Guides	
	<i>Types of tourism: active, mountain-based tourism, ecotourism</i> (General Brochure 2012)
<p><i>Argeş county – Curtea de Argeş</i> <i>Tourist attractions: Curtea de Argeş Monastery, Poenari Fortress, Dâmbovicioara Cave, Sân Nicoară Church, Transfăgărăşan</i> <i>Types of tourism: cultural, religious tourism, speleology tourism</i> (General Brochure 2012)</p> <p><i>Tourist attractions: Piatra Craiului National Park</i> <i>Types of tourism: rural tourism, speleology, active tourism, ecotourism</i> (Natura Brochure)</p> <p><i>Tourist attractions: Făgăraş Mountains</i> <i>Types of tourism: active, mountain-based tourism, ecotourism</i> (Natura Brochure)</p>	<p><i>Dolj county</i> <i>Tourist attractions: Arts Museum from Craiova</i> <i>Types of tourism: cultural, urban tourism</i> (General Brochure 2012)</p>
<p><i>Dâmboviţa county – Târgovişte</i> <i>Tourist attractions: Sf. Vineri Church, Chindiei Tower, Royal Court</i> <i>Types of tourism: cultural, religious, urban tourism</i> (Cities from Romania Brochure)</p>	
<p><i>Giurgiu county</i> <i>Tourist attractions: Comana Natural Park</i> <i>Types of tourism: cultural tourism, ecotourism</i> (General Brochure 2012, Natura Brochure)</p>	

Source: information processed after the studied guides and brochures.

Among the tourist attractions presented in the offline environment (guides and brochures), which were based on the very tourism essence of the two studied regions, an important part of the corresponding superlatives have been identified, fact which indicates that the two sources, relatively homogenous in segmentation, targeting and strategy of the message, represent the most serious tourism information and documentation source. The superlatives of the regions, as the essence of the cultural-historical identity (especially urban), and, implicitly, the touristic one, have been thus capitalized by the presence of all superlative-museums from Bucharest: “Grigore Antipa” Museum, National History Museum of Romania, National Museum of Geology and Village Museum (Table 2). Furthermore, other important buildings and resorts with tourism potential from the region have been presented. Even though these instruments presented the tourist attractions as constitutive elements of some complex tourism products, occasionally including predefined circuits and routes, there exist tourism destinations and corresponding attractions within the

superlatives, which not only that were not designed as an independent tourism product, but, moreover, they were not even included in any established route (examples, the area of Brăila – Balta Brăilei, Fetești-Cernavodă, Călărași and Teleorman county).

Regarding Oltenia, the most important highlighted superlatives have been Drobeta-Turnu Severin, Podul lui Dumnezeu and Turnu Roșu-Cozia, both by the frequency of the contact points (number of guides and brochures in which they appear) and by the importance they have as tourism destinations or attractions (Table 2), fact which determines their visibility and, consequently, knowledge and recognition among potential tourists. Thus, even though Băile Olănești destination is mentioned in some of the guides, it occupies a secondary place within the proposed journey that does not have as corresponding form of tourism, its specificity – balneotherapy tourism, situation that could not maximally capitalize its touristic potential.

Table 2

Superlatives of the regions found within the offline communication means

Superlatives of Muntenia and Oltenia regions found within the offline written communication means	
Muntenia	Oltenia
Azuga	Băile Olănești
Bucharest	Drobeta-Turnu Severin
Comana	Mehedinți Plateau
Clock Museum of Ploiești	Ocnele Mari
“Grigore Antipa” Museum	Podul lui Dumnezeu
National History Museum of Romania	Turnu Roșu-Cozia
National Museum of Geology	
Village Museum	
Palace of the Parliament	
Sinaia	
Slănic	
Snagov	
Vidraru	

Source: processing after Mărculeț (coord.) (2010).

As the communication activities, traditionally viewed, endorse the achievement of an objective from a certain category or the achievement of a set of objectives from one or more categories, in order to establish an integrated communication, the Internet, through all its instruments and techniques (examples, newsletters, blogs, online applications, social media etc.), has the role of contributing to the achievement of each of the communication objectives pursued by the organisation (processing after Vegheș, 2003, p. 206). Additionally, it is necessary that the analyzed online environment should be dissociated in the awarded sites at the E-travel conference and sites of the tourism offices from abroad, as the latter have, to a large extent, the character of a printed promotional material, in which there can be found, on a smaller scale,

the specific tourist attractions, presented as communication elements in guides and brochures (Table 3). The most imported destinations and attractions correspond to the ones found in guides, which were, subsequently, merged and adapted to the target markets (example, the United States office presents several circuits as main tourism products, the Austria office eloquently presents destinations for the balneotherapy tourism etc.), complying with the psychographic characteristics of the potential tourist (example, sport tourism is better represented than in the case of other instruments). The superlatives which were found are subscribed to the same category as those from the guides, meaning, cultural objectives: museums from Bucharest and resorts that allow practicing a form of tourism corresponding to a specific interest (example, Azuga – mountain-based tourism, Băile Olănești – balneotherapy tourism). In the online environment (in which promotional materials are presented in Romanian), analyzed by means of the institutions awarded within E-travel Conference, the superlatives which were found are represented actually by two destinations, one of them being Băile Olănești – for balneotherapy tourism, and the other, Drobeta-Turnu Severin – for cultural tourism. Contrary to the principles of integrated communication, but also to those of tourism marketing, in general, is the inconsistency between the types of tourism presented within the studied promotion means and the specificity of the corresponding channel. Therefore, balneotherapy tourism, which in its form of treatment tourism takes a “regulated” form, of good practices (objective informative materials being necessary in this respect), is present, to a larger extent, in the online environment, which is an “open” and non-specialized environment, while other types of tourism, such as relaxation tourism (in which personal experiences have a significant added value to the informative messages), are better represented in the written materials (guides and brochures)!

Table 3

Attractions and destinations in the online environment	
Online environment	
<i>Mix of online instruments (online booking systems, online tourism agencies, mobile applications, newsletters, Facebook pages and applications, blogs, publications, others)</i>	
Muntenia	Oltenia
Pitești, Buzău, Brăila, Târgoviște, Giurgiu, Slobozia, Bucharest –cultural tourism Giurgiu – rest tourism Amara, Pucioasa – relaxation, balneotherapy tourism Călărași, Buzău counties – recreation tourism Bucharest – event tourism, relaxation at spa, business tourism, cultural tourism for young people with increased revenues (National Museum of Maps and Old Books from Bucharest) Argeș, Buzău counties – rural tourism Prahova Valley – mountain-based tourism	Râmnicu Vâlcea, Târgu Jiu (park with Brâncuși's sculptures), monasteries: Arnota, Tismana, Hurezi, Bistrița, the famous fortified manors - cule - Greceanu, Duca, Bujoreni, Cernătescu, Tudor Vladimirescu Horezu – lilac forest from Ponoare, Podul lui Dumnezeu, Muierii Cave, Topolnița Băile Olănești, Călimănești-Căciulata – balneotherapy-mountain-based tourism Rânca Drobeta-Turnu Severin – Drobeta Turnu Severin hotel, Porțile-de-Fier, cruises on the Danube – business tourism

<i>Tourism offices from abroad</i>	
<p><i>Bucharest</i> <i>Tourist attractions:</i> museums, events, parks <i>Types of tourism:</i> cultural, urban tourism (Spain, Austria, Italy)</p> <p><i>Tourist attractions – Bucharest – transit point:</i> circuit to Târgoviște, Curtea de Argeș</p>	<p><i>Târgu Jiu</i> <i>Tourist attractions:</i> monuments created by Brâncuși, museums, events, parks <i>Type of tourism:</i> cultural tourism (Spain, United States)</p>
<p><i>Prahova Valley</i> <i>Tourist attractions:</i> Azuga, Bușteni, Sinaia <i>Types of tourism:</i> recreation, mountain-based, cultural tourism (Austria, Italy)</p>	<p><i>Horezu</i> <i>Tourist attractions:</i> Hurezi Monastery <i>Type of tourism:</i> urban tourism (Austria)</p>
<p><i>Sinaia</i> <i>Tourist attractions:</i> Bucegi Mountains with Pietra Arsă and Furnica Peaks <i>Type of tourism:</i> mountain-based tourism (Spain, Austria)</p> <p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> Peleş, Peleşor castles, Bucegi Mountains <i>Types of tourism:</i> cultural, mountain-based tourism, ecotourism (United States, Austria)</p>	<p><i>Oltenia</i> <i>Tourist attractions:</i> fortified civil buildings <i>Type of tourism:</i> cultural tourism (Spain)</p> <p><i>Tourist attractions:</i> Băile Olănești, Călimănești-Căciulata, Băile Govora <i>Type of tourism:</i> urban tourism (Austria)</p>
<p><i>Curtea de Argeș</i> <i>Tourist attractions:</i> Byzantine and post-Byzantine churches <i>Types of tourism:</i> cultural, religious tourism (Spain)</p>	<p><i>Craiova</i> <i>Tourist attractions:</i> museums, events, parks <i>Type of tourism:</i> urban tourism (United States)</p>
<p><i>Bușteni</i> <i>Tourist attractions:</i> Cantacuzino castle, ski tracks <i>Types of tourism:</i> sports, camping, mountain-based tourism (Austria)</p>	
<p><i>Buzău</i> <i>Tourist attractions:</i> Mud Volcanoes <i>Type of tourism:</i> ecotourism (Austria)</p>	
<p><i>Câmpina</i> <i>Tourist attractions:</i> churches, museums <i>Type of tourism:</i> cultural tourism (Austria)</p>	
<p><i>Comarnic, Breaza</i> <i>Tourist attractions:</i> palaces, churches, "Lac de Verde" golf club <i>Types of tourism:</i> sports tourism, camping, health tourism (Austria)</p>	
<i>Superlatives of the regions within the online communication means</i>	
Azuga, Bucharest, Sinaia	Băile Olănești, Drobeta-Turnu Severin, Podul lui Dumnezeu

Source: the sites of the tourism offices from abroad and the sites of the online tourism agencies, online publications, blogs, mobile applications, social media awarded within the E-travel conference.

Comparing the two tables (1 and 3), it can be noticed that:

1) the offline instruments are based on a multidisciplinary documentation, offering objective information and details regarding history and geography for substantiating the presentation of the most important destinations and objectives from the two regions;

2) although the main characteristic of the online environment is the precise targeting of consumer segments and dynamics, these two functions have been highlighted by other means of communication such as guides, in which one can find detailed information about the consumers, but also various tourism products (within which the positioning elements are clearly delimited and placed in a broader, relevant frame, that of the country brand).

As the principle of cohesion between the two sources of communication must exist, offline and online, at least regarding the representative, essential attractions of a destination, for the purpose of evaluating the mix of communication instruments, it is necessary to compare the basis of the pyramid with its top (Figure 1). Thus, there has been selected information mainly referring to cultural attractions and destinations – customary elements from the “background of each holiday” – from the most complex guide in the authors’ opinion (Michelin Guide), along with those from the encyclopedia “Romania’s Superlatives”, which were subsequently configured in key-words, in order to be retrieved in the online environment, represented by Facebook pages (Table 4). As the starting point was the idea according to which this communication instrument’s role is to highlight the information background on a destination/attraction that is already considered by means of other instruments, there have been considered only those Facebook pages having in the title’s composition, the name of the respective destination/attraction, accepting the idea that there are also other pages having a relevant, yet not specific content.

With regard to Muntenia destination, there can be noticed that majority of the Facebook pages focus on the geographic position, the accessible information being related to the number of likes, of visits and of discussions, composing the dimension of the “touristic phenomenon” given by the respective attraction/destination and explained by the users’ “communicational vector”. Consequently, the page of geographic position has, to a large extent, a general informative role, the role of persuasion being fulfilled by the other users who signal their presence in that particular place or share their opinion regarding the respective attraction/destination in the online environment, and not by a certain entity that assigns a communicational budget making constant efforts in order to promote the tourism objective. In this situation, in Muntenia, only the Romanian Peasant Museum, the National Contemporary Arts Museum

and “Grigore Antipa” Museum have updated Facebook pages, with various information on the museums and about other subjects/news that coincide with the interests of the potential visitors, with representative photographs and constant events, ensuring a continuous visibility in the online environment. While the absence of the churches (cultural objectives) is explained to a certain extent through the discretion required by the nature of the specific activities, the reduced visibility of some important tourist attractions, such as Village Musuem and Cișmigiu Park (with 700-800 likes) is inexplicable!

Besides Bucharest destination, which, even though not intensely represented on Facebook, is broadly illustrated, the other destinations and attractions from Muntenia (considered having an important touristic potential) do not have a specific page, attended by interested economic agents or local authorities, except for Slănic Prahova destination, which has a “dedicated” group of discussions (306 members). It should be noticed that two museums whose object of activity is represented by elements of uniqueness of the region/country (National Oil Museum and Folk Costumes Museum from Romania) are not at all represented on Facebook, their visibility being close to zero for those tourists that do not use the communication means from the basis of the pyramid, which substantiate the identity elements.

Table 4

**Information from guides versus information on the Facebook pages
for Muntenia destination**

Information from guides versus information on the Facebook pages for Muntenia	
Key-words from the guides	Facebook pages
Bucharest	Location: 2,541,671 likes, 1,290,339 people have been there, 120,063 are talking about this topic Additional pages: Where do we go out in Bucharest? – events – 484 members, Bucharest Optimist - 35.346 likes
Sfântul Gheorghe Church (Bucharest)	Location: 8 people like this, 94 people have been there, 2 people are talking about this topic
Lipscani District	Location: 6,406 people like this, 49,097 people have been there, 227 people are talking about this topic Various pages of the restaurants from Lipscani District
National History Museum	Location: 302 people like this, 5,237 people have been there, 107 people are talking about this topic
Stavropoleos Church	-
Manuc's Inn	Location: 1,075 people like this, 15,096 people have been there, 117 people are talking about this topic
Jewish Community Museum	-
Metropolitan's Church hill	Location: 75 people like this
Palace of Parliament	Location: 10,024 people like this, 48 people are talking about this topic
National Arts Museum	Location: 357 people like this, 2,457 people have been there, 18 people are talking about this topic

Information from guides versus information on the Facebook pages for Muntenia	
Key-words from the guides	Facebook pages
National Contemporary Arts Museum	Location: 2,168 people like this, 6,982 people have been there, 74 people are talking about this topic Additional page: MNAC Bucharest – 7,618 likes (events)
Folk Costumes Museum from Romania	-
Cișmigiu Park	Location: 730 like this, 15 people are talking about this topic
Military Circle	Location: 272 people like this, 9,724 people have been there, 49 people are talking about this topic
Revolution Square	Location: 555 people like this, 4,973 people have been there, 28 people are talking about this topic
Romanian Athenaeum	Location: 2,920 people like this, 16,028 people have been there, 118 people are talking about this topic
Village Museum	Location: 796 people like this, 12,956 people are talking about this topic, 219 people are talking about this topic Additional page: "Dimitrie Gusti" National Village Museum – 865 members
Romanian Peasant Museum	Location: 34,521 people like this, 750 people are talking about this topic Additional page: Romanian Peasant Museum – 34,521 likes (information, events)
"Grigore Antipa" Musuem	Location: 10,820 people like this, 133 people were here, 412 people are talking about this topic Additional page: "Grigore Antipa" National Museum of Natural History – 34,521 likes (information and events)
Zoological garden (Bucharest)	Location: 26 people like this, 41 people are talking about this, 1,002 people are talking about this topic
Slănic Prahova	Location: 5,123 people like this, 6,760 people have been there, 89 people are talking about this topic Additional page: Slănic Prahova – Stațiune balneoclimaterică – 306 membri
National Oil Museum	-
Clock Musuem (Ploiești)	Location: 32 people like this, 513 people have been there, 4 people are talking about this topic
Mud Volcanoes	Location: 1,387 people like this, 18,730 people have been there, 391 people are talking about this topic
Peleş Castle	Location: 8,908 people like this, 769 people have been there, 151 people are talking about this topic Additional page: Muzeul Național Peleş (information, events)
Comana	Location: 838 people like this, 5,356 people have been there, 90 people are talking about this topic
Snagov	Location: 127 people like this, 3,691 people have been there, 68 people are talking about this topic Additional pages: Snagov City, Snagov Club, Snagov Palace
Vidraru	Location: 281 people like this, 5,518 people have been there, 119 people are talking about this topic

Source: information processed from the Facebook pages of the tourist attractions and destinations considered, accessed on 24.05.2013.

Oltenia region is not so intensely represented on Facebook, no objective from the Michelin Guide or from “Romania’s Superlatives” having any specific Facebook page, administered by a person/company, which updates it with information regarding its touristic potential or the specific activities and events (Table 5). Considering the volume and the nature of the information from the offline environment, superlatives such as Podul lui Dumnezeu and Polovragi, although mentioned and appreciated (48, respectively 935 likes) have no correspondent in the online environment!

Similarly, Drobeta-Turnu Severin and Horezu (destinations which are also promoted in the offline environment) record on Facebook between 9,000-11,000 likes, however these actions will increase the visibility of the tourist objectives only among the persons connected to the users who have appreciated the destinations. In conclusion, this instrument is mainly used due to its lever effect (from certain users to the communities to whom they are connected). Therefore, there is even more necessary to sustain the hierarchy presented in Figure 1, according to which it is recommendable that the “basis of information” should be communicated/extracted from the written channels of communication such as, the books, guides, atlases, while the online instruments (example, Facebook social media) should be strictly used as means of accessing friends’ experiences and opinions; presently, in view of substantiating the buying decision of tourism products for the two destinations, Muntenia and Oltenia, there is no sufficient, controllable and periodically managed information.

In other words, the cumulated knowledge, fundamented with information from guides, represents “the hidden documentation database” to which the tourist unconsciously turns regarding a tourism destination (having proven before the overlapping with the objective superlatives); afterwards, it shall be completed and nuanced with other information/instruments from the online environment (Figure 1), but also with information presented at the tourism fairs.

Table 5

**Information from guides versus information on the Facebook pages
for destination Oltenia**

Information from guides versus information on the Facebook pages for Oltenia	
Key-words from the guides	Facebook pages
Cozia Monastery	Location: 182 likes, 4,843 people have been there, 145 are talking about this topic
Râmnicu Vâlcea	Location: 138,138 people like this, 115,923 people have been there, 5,071 people are talking about this topic
Govora Monastery	Location: 9 people like this, 103 people have been there, 1 person is talking about this topic
Dintr-un Lemn Monastery	Location: 116 people like this, 1,876 people have been there, 45 people are talking about this topic

Information from guides versus information on the Facebook pages for Oltenia	
Key-words from the guides	Facebook pages
Horezu	Location: 10,649 people like this, 18,299 people have been there, 171 people are talking about this topic
Măldărăști	-
Polovragi	Location: 935 people like this, 3,513 people have been there, 31 people are talking about this topic * Polovragi Cave
Târgu Jiu	Location: 1,751 people like this, 8,917 people have been there, 411 people are talking about this topic Additional pages: Târgu Jiu Odinioară, Centrul Brâncuși Târgu Jiu
Tismana Monastery	-
Craiova	Location: 357 people like this, 2,457 people have been there, 18 people are talking about this topic
Art Museum (Craiova)	Location: 379,700 people like this, 288,793 people have been there, 13,745 people are talking about this topic
Romanescu Park	Romanescu Park Craiova – Community, Nicolae Romanescu Park, Nicolae Romanescu Park Craiova
Drobeta-Turnu Severin	Location: 9,363 like this, 85,643 people have been there, 2,996 people are talking about this topic
Băile Olănești	Location: 378 people like this, 12,223 people have been there, 156 people are talking about this topic
Ocnele Mari	Pages: Ocnele Mari pool, Ocnele Mari saltworks
Podul lui Dumnezeu	Location: 48 people like this, 672 people have been there, 28 people are talking about this topic

Source: information processed from the Facebook pages of the tourist attractions and destinations considered, accessed on 24.05.2013.

Unlike this type of information, “technical” and targeted, which is supposed to be specific to the online environment, the “encountered”/present information have a general character, the presentation of the accommodation, transport and food services being a non-differentiated one, fragmented and unorganized. Their part, in this context, meaning the one to offer an extensive support with regard to the number of users, but also to the volume of “subjective”, and in the same time documented information, based on resources, but also on experiences, that supplements the fundamentals of offline communication, remains an insignificant one!

Conclusions

Even though the destinations promoted within each region were largely found in most of the analyzed communication channels (examples, for Muntenia: Bucharest, Sinaia, Curtea de Argeș, Târgoviște and for Oltenia – Târgu Jiu), this fact does not offer enough arguments for an integrated marketing communication in tourism. For this, in the authors’ opinion, the

concerned company, the Resort Ministry or any other supporter of this field should value its entire communicational capital (focusing on the important and brand elements) through the communicational objectives, subordinated to the general marketing objectives of each destination (established according to the dominant resources and preponderant types of tourism wanted to be developed), and these, in their turn, subordinated to the marketing objectives established by the marketing program elaborated within the national strategy of tourism development, respectively in the Master plan.

The lack of unity with regard to the tourist attractions and the types of tourism which should reside at the basis of the brand elements of the two regions being argued, the success of the promotion actions could not take place but in the case of creating some specific strategies for different segments of consumers, which can be targeted only by means of certain communication channels. In this respect, it is necessary to clearly define the tourism products and establish in detail the markets they will access, defining the destination, at global level, as a synergy of “combined superlatives”.

Furthermore, it is also necessary to create a coherent message, specific to each component destination of the region, which would represent a constitutive element of the regional brand and that would filter the types of tourism, the tourist attractions – located under the same conceptual umbrella – according to the targeted segments and communication channels.

Limits

Given the supported dynamics of transmitting messages in both environments, but especially in the online one, the main limit of this analysis is related to the fact that, within the multiple marketing channels and instruments, there is a considerable volume of promotional or communicational messages, being difficult to “scan” them in their entirety even at a certain point. Thus, in the case of a future research, it derives the necessity to extend the “sample” of offline communication instruments by introducing other relevant guides and brochures, as well as the permanent and more detailed analysis of all the instruments from the online environment (examples, consideration of more Facebook pages, the analysis of their evolution, the consideration of other socialization networks such as Twitter, Pinterest etc.). Furthermore, the analysis on tourist segments is recommended (actual and potential), but also the events in which the communicational materials can be presented to the potential tourists (example, Romania’s Tourism Fair).

Note

- ⁽¹⁾ The brochures have been collected during the two tourism fairs, fall and spring editions, which have taken place during October 2012 – March 2013, by the licence and master students from the Marketing, Commerce and Agriculture and Environment Economy within The Bucharest University of Economic Studies, promotion 2012/2013 and from The Entrepreneurship, Engineering and Affairs Management Faculty within The University “Politehnica” of Bucharest, whom we thank on this occasion.

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