

## ANALYSIS OF HOTEL ENTERPRISES COMPETITIVENESS ASPECTS IN MODERN BUSINESS

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Review Scientific Paper

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**In terms of global competition, which is characterized by constant improvement of existing and the emergence of new tourist destination, tourism is nowadays one of the initiators in development of the national economy. It is important to point out that the relation of tourists toward travelling changed with greater differentiation and the emergence of new market niches. The reason for this relationship lies in the fact that tourists, due to the greater application of information and communication technologies (ICT), have become very well informed about the tourist destinations they visit, their cultural and other facilities, as well as hotels and the services they offer. In order to meet the demands of their customers, hotel companies have to follow market trends and implement new management concepts into their business practices. Hotel companies today take into account not only their customers, but also the society in which they operate. The issue of sustainable development has become the sphere of interest for hotel companies, and they are paying a lot of attention to the following areas: environmental protection, waste management, application of clean technologies and the alike. The ICT applications have a significant role in hotel industries operations since they accelerate communication with customers and also reduce operating costs through the use of different software solutions for accommodation bookings. Nowadays, customers demand quick information and the use of the internet in hotels allows this service.**

**Keywords:** Competitiveness, hotel companies, tourism, customer satisfaction.

### INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, tourism has experienced continuous growth and deepening diversification, which have enabled it to become one of the fastest growing industries in the world. This dynamics has turned tourism into a key driver of socio-economic progress. Today, the business volume of tourism equals or even exceeds the oil, food products or automobiles export. The global spread of tourism in industrialized and developed states has produced economic effects and employment benefits in many related sectors - from construction to agriculture and telecommunications. In the same time, tourism has taken a leading role in international trade, and represents one of the main sources of income for many developing countries.

Contribution of tourism to economic prosperity depends on the quality and the advent of the tourist

offer (UNWTO, 2015). Hotel companies need to identify market segments in which they want to perform, in order to enable rising profit margins and realize financial security. End users are nowadays well informed and affected by a number of information. This is the reason why hotel companies have to follow all the customers' needs and wishes in order to customize its service to their requirements.

In the beginning, travel was affordable only for those who have significant financial resources and for the nobility. With the development of tourism and hotel industry, prices of travel services decreased and tourism became accessible to the members of all parts of society. The development of society has brought changes with users of hotel services themselves, because there is significant market segmentation process and distinctive groups based on their needs, affinities, desires and

preferences, such as: business, adventure, sports, luxury, rural groups etc.

Modern tourism encompasses a growing number of new destinations and greater competition among destinations. This diversification process along with new market trends and new demands of hotel customers require from hotel companies to respond better to these challenges and to implement new management concepts, such as: benchmarking, quality management system (QMS), integrated management system (IMS), corporate social responsibility (CSR). Hotel enterprises should continuously be engaged in improving the quality of hotel services if they want to survive in the marketplace and become excellent business enterprises.

**THE ROLE OF TOURISM IN MODERN ECONOMY**

The increase in travel and tourism sector has shown considerable resilience to the global level. Despite the slow economic growth in developed economies and geopolitical tensions in certain regions, this sector still accounts for a large part of

the global economy and employment (estimated to make up about 9% of global GDP, or \$ 7 trillion).

The number of international passengers continues to grow which is indicated in Table 1 based on World Tourism Organization (WTO) data relating to international tourists travel by region, as well as their market share. In 2014 there was 1.133 billion of international tourist in the world which is 46 million more than in 2013 (1.087). This increasing demand trend is very important for the tourism industry despite the geopolitical, economic, and health crisis in some parts of the world.

Europe continues its leadership in the field of international tourist arrivals with 51,4% market share. Asia is on the second place, indicating large growth especially in the north-east Asia. With 55,7million international tourist arrivals in 2014, Africa has become a big tourism boom since 2005. This primarily refers to Sub-Saharan area, as well as North Africa, which show significant growth trends. For the further touristic development of African region, it is necessary that these countries maintain political and economic safety, as well as the health security.

*Table 1: Number of international tourist arrivals by regions in million and regional market shares in %*

	International Tourist Arrivals (million)				Market Share (%)	Change (%)	Average annual (%)
	2005	2010	2013	2014	2014*	14*/13	2005-2014
<b>World</b>	809	949	1.087	1.113	100	4.3	3.8
<b>Advanced economies</b>	296	513	586	619	54.7	5.8	3.2
<b>Emerging economies</b>	139	435	501	513	45.3	2.4	4.6
<b>Europe</b>	261.5	488.9	566.4	581.8	51.4	2.7	2.8
Northern Europe	28.7	62.8	67.4	71.3	6.3	5.9	2
Western Europe	108.6	154.4	170.8	174.5	15.4	2.2	2.3
CEE*	33.9	98.4	127.3	121.1	10.7	-4.9	2.7
SME**	90.3	173.3	201	214.9	19	6.9	3.6
- of which EU-28	230.1	384.3	433.8	455.1	40.2	4.9	2.4
<b>Asia and the Pacific</b>	55.8	205.4	249.8	263.3	23.2	5.4	6.1
North-East Asia	26.4	111.5	127	136.3	12	7.3	5.3
South-East Asia	21.2	70.5	94.3	96.7	8.5	5.7	7.9
Oceania	5.2	11.4	12.5	13.2	1.2	5.7	2.1
South Asia	3.1	12	16	17.1	1.5	6.8	8.6
<b>Americas</b>	92.8	150.1	167.5	181	16	8	3.5
North America	71.8	99.5	110.2	120.4	10.6	9.2	3.3
Caribbean	11.4	19.5	21.1	22.4	2	6.2	2.
Central America	1.9	7.9	9.1	9.6	0.8	5.6	4.8
South America	7.7	23.1	27.1	28.6	2.5	5.4	5.1
<b>Africa</b>	14.7	49.5	54.4	55.7	4.9	2.4	5.4
North Africa	8.4	18.8	19.6	19.8	1.7	0.9	4
Sub-Saharan Africa	6.3	30.8	34.7	35.9	3.2	3.3	6.2
<b>Middle East</b>	9.6	54.7	48.4	51	4.5	5.4	4.7

\* Central/Eastern Europe  
 \*\* Southern/Medit. Europe  
 Source: UNWTO, 2015

In order to evaluate the best world tourist destinations, it is advisable to take into consideration more than one parameter for relevant ranking. Two key indicators that need to be considered in this respect are: 1) the number of international tourists' arrivals and 2) earned revenue from international tourists. Tables 2 and 3 show seven leading countries (France, Spain, USA, China, Italy, Germany and the United Kingdom) according to both indicators. The first four countries are identical in both tables and differ only by their position. These countries can be indicated as the most attractive tourist destinations of the world. France is a country that was visited by about 84 million international tourists (rank 1<sup>st</sup> in table 2) in 2014, and earned US \$ 55.4 billion in the same year (ranked on 4th place in table 3). Spain is the country that earned the most from tourism compared to other countries in Europe (65.2 billion). China in the past two decades has a large increase in travel and generates 13.2% of global revenues from tourism and its tourism offer includes many destinations in Asia and the Pacific.

Table 2: International Tourist Arrivals

Rang		Million		Change (%)	
		2013	2014	13/12	14/13
1.	France	83.6	83.7	2	0.1
2.	United States	70	74.8	5	6.8
3.	Spain	60.7	65	5.6	7.1
4.	China	55.7	55.6	-3.5	-0.1
5.	Italy	47.7	48.6	2.9	1.8
6.	Turkey	37.8	39.8	5.9	5.3
7.	Germany	31.5	33	3.7	4.6
8.	United Kingdom	31.1	32.6	6.1	5
9.	Russian Federation	28.4	29.8	10.2	5.3
10.	Mexico	24.2	29.1	3.2	20.5

Source: UNWTO, 2015

Table 3: International Tourism Receipts (US\$)

Rang		Million		Change (%)	
		2013	2014	13/12	14/13
1.	United States	172.9	177.2	7	2.5
2.	Spain	62.6	65.2	7.6	4.2
3.	China	51.7	56.9	3.3	9.2
4.	France	56.7	55.4	5.6	-2.3
5.	Macao (China)	51.8	50.8	18.1	-1.9
6.	Italy	43.9	45.5	6.6	3.7
7.	United Kingdom	41	45.3	12.1	4.8
8.	Germany	41.3	43.3	8.2	4.9
9.	Thailand	41.8	38.4	23.4	-.2.7
10.	Hong Kong (China)	38.9	38.4	17.7	-1.5

Source: UNWTO, 2015

In order to attract tourist and earn from them, hotel enterprises need to know from which countries they can expect the highest number of visitors. Table 4 shows a list of countries with the highest level of tourism expenditure. China is a country whose tourists spend the most- 164.9 billion USD in 2014, which is by 27.1% more than in the previous year. In the period 2012-2013., the growth was 23.8%, which indicates the power of the Chinese economy and huge potential in consumer power. Besides China, the other major consumer is the USA with 110.8 billion of tourism expenditure in 2014, which is by 20 billion less than China.

As seen from Table 4, between the first three countries: China, USA and Germany, there is a large difference compared to other countries, both in total international tourism expenditures as well as in terms of the expenditures per capita. Germans spend the most as tourists per capita and on the second place are Australians.

Table 4: International tourism expenditures total, and per capita, market shares in %

Rang		International Tourism Expenditure (US\$ billion)		Market share (%)	Population (million)	Expenditure per capita (US\$)
		2013	2014	2014	2014	2014
1.	China	128.6	164.9	13.2	1.368	121
2.	United States	104.1	110.8	8.9	319	347
3.	Germany	91.4	92.2	7.4	81	1,137
4.	United Kingdom	52.7	57.6	4.6	65	893
5.	Russian Federation	53.5	50.4	4	144	351
6.	France	42.9	47.8	3.8	64	747
7.	Canada	35.2	33.8	2.7	35	951
8.	Italy	27	28.8	2.3	60	481
9.	Australia	28.6	26.3	2.1	24	1,114
10.	Brazil	25	25.6	2.1	203	126

Source: UNWTO, 2015

Besides the analyzed indicators, World Tourism Organization follows many other different data.

They indicate that the largest numbers of tourists are going to a destination using air traffic, 54% of

them, concerning the purpose of travel 53% of respondents said that they travel for leisure, recreation and relaxation. Revenues from international visitors spend on accommodation, food and drink, entertainment, shopping and other services and goods, reached an estimated 1.245 billion dollars (937 billion euros) in 2014, what is an increase of 3.7% in real terms (taking into account the fluctuation of the exchange rate and inflation (UNWTO, 2015).

Having all these indicators in mind, World Economic Forum (Forum, 2015) created the index of competitiveness in travel and tourism. The most competitive tourist & travel countries in 2015 are Spain, France and Germany (Table 5). The most-represented countries on the list are from Europe (6), which points to the fact that the tradition of tourism and hotel industry on this continent still exists. The region of Asia-Pacific has a constant growth in the tourism and hotel industry and shows the potential to change the global picture of the tourism and hospitality in the future. Important element in creating tourism potential of Asia and the Pacific tourist destinations is cheap air transport offer. On the Sky-track list of the best cheap air traffic companies in 2015 seven out of the top 10 companies are from the region of Asia and the Pacific.

Table 5: The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index 2015 Ranking

Rank	Country/Economy	Value
1	Spain	5.31
2	France	5.24
3	Germany	5.22
4	United States	5.12
5	United Kingdom	5.12
6	Switzerland	4.99
7	Australia	4.98
8	Italy	4.98
9	Japan	4.94
10	Canada	4.92

Source: Forum, 2015

In Table 6, we can see the list of countries, which set the areas of tourism and travel as a development priorities in their economic policy. These countries in Table 6 have the image of the popular tourist destinations. In some countries in this table, tourism and hospitality is one of the strongest, material handling.

Although the price is only one of the many factors for tourists that determine selection of destination, it is obviously very important. In this respect World Economic Forum's "Travel and Tourism

Competitiveness Report 2015", calculate the price competitiveness of different tourist destinations on the basis of the tax of the tickets and airport taxes, hotel price index, the purchasing power parity and fuel prices (4). According to this assessment of 141 economies, the most expensive counties for tourists are Switzerland, United Kingdom and France (Table 7). In the group of leading ten most expensive tourist's destination countries even eight are from Europe. Importantly, the price competitiveness index of tourist destinations shows that decline in the value decreases competitiveness at the same time.

Table 6: States which have made travel and tourism the priorities

Rank	Country/Economy
1	Malta
2	Mauritius
3	Cyprus
4	Singapore
5	Iceland
6	Spain
7	Dominican Republic
8	Seychelles
9	Estonia
10	Barbados

Source: Forum, 2015

Table 7: The most expensive country for tourists

Rank	Country/Economy	Value
1	Switzerland	2.57
2	United Kingdom	2.73
3	France	2.95
4	Australia	3.06
5	Norway	3.23
6	Israel	3.24
7	Denmark	3.31
8	Sweden	3.38
9	Italy	3.49
10	Austria	3.49

Source: Forum, 2015

### IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF HOTEL ENTERPRISES OPERATING IN THE GLOBAL MARKET

Hotel enterprises in modern operating conditions must respond to the challenges they are facing. When we talk about the global market, it is important to emphasize that all the changes as well as new trends are affecting the hotel businesses. One of the main business philosophies of hotel companies is the constant improvement of hotel services in order to achieve guest satisfaction and provide a competitive advantage compared to other

hotel companies. One way of creating a competitive advantage is to create hotel brand.

Also, we should not ignore the fact that serious changes in the hotel hospitality market occurred in the location of the world's best hotels. According to the list by an online magazine Hotels.com (Hotels, 2015), shown in Table 8, six out of the first ten best hotels are from the United States and two from Europe and China. This ratio increases to the final list of the top 50 hotel companies, where

the number of hotels in the region of North America is 21 (US 20, Canada 1), in the region of Asia and the Pacific 17 (China 14, Japan 2, Singapore 1) and Europe 12. These data show that some countries with no prior significance have appeared on hotel hospitality market. Also, the appearance of hotel businesses from the region of Asia and the Pacific shows the development of these national economies, which is a prerequisite for the success of the hotel industry among other industries that help its development, such as traffic.

Table 8: The top ten hotel companies in 2013-2014 according to capacity

2014 Rank	2013 Rank	Company	Location	2014 Rooms	2014 Hotels	2013 Rooms	2013 Hotels
1	2	Hilton Worldwide	McLean, Virginia, USA	715.062	4.322	678.630	4.115
2	3	Marriott International	Bethesda, Maryland, USA	714.7665	4.175	675.623	3.916
3	1	IHG	Denham, England	710.295	4.840	679.050	4.653
4	4	Wyndham Hotel Group	Parsippany, New Jersey, USA	660.826	7.645	645.423	7.485
5	5	Choice Hotels International	Rockville, Maryland, USA	500.000	6.300	506.058	6.340
6	6	Accor Hotels	Paris, France	482.296	3.717	461.719	3.576
7	12	Plateno Hotels Group	Guangzhou, China	442.490	3.023	166.446	1.726
8	7	Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide	Stamford, Connecticut, USA	354.225	1.222	346.819	1.175
9	10	Shanghai Jin International Hotel Group	Shanghai, China	352.538	2.910	235.461	1.566
10	8	Best Western International	Phoenix, Arizona, USA	303.522	3.931	317.838	4.097

Source: Hotels, 2015

Every brand includes the establishment of a consistent system of quality. In the same way hotel brands are synonymous of the certain level of quality for their consumers. This is particularly important in the international hotel business, because questions of categorization of hotel capacities have not been resolved in a unique way in all countries. This may result in significant variations in the level of quality and price of services within the framework of declaratory the same category of hotel facility. Because of this, the corporate hotel chains establish a set of standards

that is unique and mandatory for all the hotels that operate under that brand. In this way consumers are guaranteed to receive a certain quality level if they choose certain hotel brand (Mašić, 2013).

Table 9 shows a list of the top ten brands of hotel companies that operate in the hotel market. As it can be seen, the leading hotel brands include the large number of hotel rooms, which affect the profitability of their parent companies. By creating brands hotel chains are trying to adapt to the demands of different segments of the hotel market.

Table 9: Top 10 Brands in the world in 2015

Rank	Brand	Parent company	Rooms	Hotels
1	7 Days Inn	Plateno Hotels Group	380.456	2.725
2	Best Western	Best Western International	303.522	3.931
3	Holiday Inn Express	IHG	229.110	2.365
4	Holiday Inn Hotels & Resorts	IHG	225.159	1.212
5	Home Inn*	Home Inns Hotels & Management	225.000	2.000
6	Hilton Hotels & Resorts	Hilton Worldwide	201.047	560
7	Hampton by Hilton	Hilton Worldwide	198.914	2.005
8	Marriott Hotels	Marriott International	179.221	499
9	Super 8	Wyndham Hotel Group	160.847	2.510
10	Sheraton	Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide	153.370	436

Source: Hotels, 2015

According to Zečević (Mašić, 2013) the advantages of branding in the hotel industry are as follows:

- shortening the usual time finding information,
- overcoming problems intangibility services,
- providing the consistency quality,



- reduced risk for shopping,
- contribution precise market segmentation.

Hotel companies must invest in their capabilities, with the aim of its own development and survival in the global hotel market. One of the investment models that is mostly used in practice, is franchising. Business policy focus of all the largest hotel companies is on the establishment of contractual forms, making the nonproprietary investment the dominant investmnet form. Franchise agreement is the leading form, followed by the management contract. The tables 10 and 11 show a list of the top 10 franchises and contract management hotel enterprises.

*Table 10: The top 10 franchising hotel chains in the world in 2015*

Rank	Company	Franchised
1	Wyndham Hotel Group	7.585
2	Choice Hotels International	6.300
3	IHG (InterContinental Hotels Group)	4.096
4	Hilton Worldwide	3.608
5	Marriott International	2.882
6	Home Inns Hotels & Management	1.695
7	Green Tree Inns Hotel Management Group	1.541
8	Accor Hotels	1.506
9	Shanghai Jin International Hotel Group	1.503
10	Vantage Hospitality Group	1.213

Source: [Hotels, 2015](#)

*Table 11: The top 10 contract managed hotel chains in the world in 2015.*

Rank	Company	Managed
1	Plateno Hotels Group	3.023
2	Home Inns Hotels & Management	1.695
3	Green Tree Inns Hotel Management Group	1.580
4	China Lodging Group	1.376
5	Marriott International	1.153
6	Accor Hotels	857
7	Shanghai Jin International Hotel Group	832
8	IHG (InterContinental Hotels Group)	735
9	Extended Stay Hotels	682
10	Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide	583

Source: [Hotels, 2015](#)

To improve the quality of services in the hotel enterprises, good communication with the guests is mandatory. Thanks to information received from its guests, the hotel enterprises improve their service quality and meet customer requirements. Hotel guests today are becoming more selective, and there is a noticeable change in priorities when selecting a hotel.

Accommodation booking site Hotels.com in the period March - April 2015 conducted the survey to find out what are the most appreciated among the all facilities and services which are offered by hotels. The sample consisted of 4,700 tourists from 28 countries. The results showed that 53% of surveyed visitors of the hotel would prefer to have free Wi-Fi in all hotel rooms as a standard feature content ([Hotels, 2015](#)).

Concerning the attitudes of business travelers compared to those who travel for pleasure, the results were the following. For both categories of passengers: those traveling for pleasure (25%) and of business travelers (49%) mostly appreciated were price free Wi-Fi. The research has shown that tourists would prefer to enjoy the benefits of the Internet, than to have breakfast which price is usually included in the price of the stay. It is interesting that the second priority, in both categories of travelers is a free breakfast, while the third is free parking (for those who travel for pleasure) and proximity to mass transportation, transportation and stores (for business travelers).

Research among hotel guests showed that a large percentage (65%) that stay in hotels were distracted by noise of other guests. That is why one high-ranking request is that the rooms are sound proof. Guests of the hotel would rather deny maid service, if it would lower the price of the stay. Also, in order to reduce the cost of accommodation, guests would exclude the use of bathrobe, personal care products, room service and fitness centers. It is also interesting that hotel guests would rather disown turndown and a bathrobe with respect to fitness centers, although they are not often used.

The results of another survey conducted by the site for booking and accommodation Agoda.com, also proved the popularity of free internet. Not only that more passengers noted Wi-Fi as the most important, but they would prefer to get free Wi-Fi, than a complimentary breakfast. Also, from more than 5,000 tourists, who had participated in this study, even ¾ of them would rather be in a hotel room that has a larg bed, and small bathroom than the other way round ([Stojanović, 2015](#)).

In the last two decades of the last century hotel companies have started to comprehensively apply the knowledge in various fields of their work such as modern methods and techniques of management, especially marketing, as well as ICT

(information communication technology) in order to improve their business and work with clients. In parallel with the development of the ICT revolution of the 80s of the last century, hotels have realized the importance of its implementation in their business. Fast way to get information becomes significant in the process of making certain decisions in the hotel business. This usually involves the question of the reservation of accommodation and cooperation when dealing with travel agencies and airline companies. Today, the hotel business can not be imagined without ICT, and global distribution systems (GDS). Also, we should not underestimate the impact of social networks and modern mobile phones, which allow hotels to have better promotion of services.

One of the key elements of the business of hotel industry, which characterizes them since their first appearance of the hotel and with the facilities we know them today, are innovations. Hotel companies need to increase their competitive advantage compared to other hotel companies and innovate in their business. Therefore, this is possible only through the application of new knowledge. In order to increase the competitiveness of modern tourist market and encourage customer loyalty, hotels must rely on modern communications technology and its business applications to introduce the use of laptops and mobile phones. Application entitled "roomer" is designed to allow guests to communicate directly with the hotel and make available all information about hotel services, while on the other hand, hoteliers have a chance for a more efficient and rational utilization of capacity, reduction of costs and creation of a unique database of guests and their habits relevant to travel and stay in a hotel ([Arbutina & Mišković, 2014](#)).

Hotel chain Starwood plans to deploy applications on a smartphone to make guests check in at the hotel and unlock the door of a hotel room. This service is now possible in more than a hundred of these hotels worldwide, mainly in America and Canada, but also in Europe. The advantage of using mobile applications is reflected in the fact that employees will no longer have a problem with the extensive bureaucracy so that they could focus of their work more efficiently and provide better service for every guest. Better experience will be given to guests both online and alive. The application itself is adapted for phones with IOS and Android operating systems and will provide hotel guests access to not only their room, but also

to the other parts of the hotel that required a key, for example: fitness center, parking and the like. Some InterContinental Hotels provide their guests with the option of signing by using smart phones, while similar features, of check in and out of the hotel are offered guests in more than a thousand Marriot hotel.

An interesting survey was conducted by Hilton hotel among its guests which showed a desire for about two-thirds of respondents to choose their room, then 30% of the guests do not like to wait until their room is ready, and that almost the same percentage of the guests said that they did not like the location of given rooms. Hilton has made more than 650,000 digital room plans and has trained 40,000 employees to be able to use this technology an enable their guest most convenient choice of the offered rooms.

#### **APPLICATION OF INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS IN THE WORK OF HOTEL COMPANIES**

Technological changes and the way in which tourists use the Internet when it comes to traveling, have created the need for more transparent ways of doing business. A large number of passengers today does not use a traditional travel agency, but make their travel plans via the Internet. International ISO standards are of great help to the tourism industry because they pave the way to a growing number of specific standards, recognised all around the world.

Technical committee ISO/TC 288 of the International Organization for Standardization, ISO, is in charge of tourism and related services. Hoteliers have the option to offer the best practices and compare them with benchmark setting of ISO/TC 288. The scope of actions of this technical committee are , 2015) ([ISO, 2015](#)) standardization of terminology and specifications of services offered by tourism organizations, including related activities, tourist destinations and the requirements of facilities and equipment used in order to provide criteria for decision-making of customers, suppliers and consumers in tourism. One of the biggest advantages of standardization by ISO/TC 228 is that consumers will be better informed when they make their decisions. Tourism market is huge and diverse, and consumers are often at a disadvantage when making decisions about destinations. International standards will help consumers in tourism to protect their interests.

International Hotel and Restaurant Association provides support for standardization in the field of tourism (hotel and catering), (IH&RA, 2015) IH&RA has become a major force in lobbying and advocating for issues affecting this industry and it assists ISO organization in bringing new and improved standards for tourism and restoration to improve the quality, safety and efficiency at all levels (Ghassan, 2010). As an associate of the International Organization for Standardization, IH&RA, provides the necessary assistance, advice, information and support for ISO organization, based on nearly 150 years of knowledge and experience in hospitality industry, especially when it comes to tourism services. For the organizations in the field of hotel industry is difficult to accept the standards issued by ISO or other regulatory bodies. The reason is in the prevailing belief that only hoteliers can understand the needs of their guests in the best way.

In order to better understand the issues that will shape the hotel industry and expected consumer dynamics in the next ten years, IBM Institute for Business Value published a study which included 2,400 respondents both from developed and developing economies who travel for business reasons and for fun (IBM, 2010). According to this study four issues, in particular will stand out as relevant to the hotels in the next ten years:

- The operational complexity (globalization will increase the already complex operating environment in most hotels),
- The pressure of costs (hotels will fight to keep costs and standardization will see as a solution),
- The need for consistency (repeatability and consistency of hotel services is desirable for hotel guests but is also a result of its lack of inconsistency systems of work),
- The overall pace of innovation in the hotel sector (innovation will be essential in the next decade, or non-standard environment will slow the pace of change).

A combination of mentioned factors increases the need for standardization in the hotel industry with the aim to achieve more quality and personalized hotel service. Level of service quality is an important factor in the guests' experience during their visit or stay at the hotel. By creating value for the customer, hotels can successfully secure the return of these satisfied visitors. Hotel managers need to recognize the importance of retaining customers, because attracting new guest is considered expensive and protracted. In the increasingly competitive market, the issue of

quality of hotel services has become a fundamental issue for hotel companies, which was affected by number of factors, such as higher consumer rights and development in tourists' awareness of quality, and on the other hand, increased competitiveness in hotel industry as hotel enterprises are now aware of the importance of quality of services they provide (Kapik, 2012).

Components of hotel services quality that need to be analyzed in order to develop and implement quality systems are as follows (Hayes et al., 2011):

1. Focus on guests, who need to be served;
2. Determining what the customer wants;
3. Developing a procedure that allows the delivery of what the customer wants;
4. Training and responsibility of staff;
5. Implementation of the revised system;
6. Evaluation and modification of service delivery systems.

In the hotel industry there are different mechanisms aimed at delivering high-quality hotel services. When it comes to accommodation of guests, two ways are dominant in order to establish a quality mark, which is the result of some form of classification schemes. These are: informing consumers and allowing the choice that the consumer made on the basis of information and secondly, investment and quality improvement by adopting and maintaining standards. Thus, two types of measurements are represented here - the physical measurement (e.g., room size) and measuring of the quality of services.

The existing quality marks in the hotel include:

1. Categorization of the hotel by the number of stars (hotels are ranked from one to five stars),
2. Travel sites with scores of hotels based on the opinion and experience of guests who have already stayed in hotels and informed potential guests publicly about it (Booking.com, 2015).
3. The implementation and certification of various series of international ISO standards, where most often are: ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO 50001.
4. Eco-labels (Ecolabel, 2009), which are becoming more frequent. The first highlights of this kind were green markings, whose aim was to improve the management of restaurants environment, but the green sign has spread to the entire tourism industry. Due to the large number of eco-labels and certification schemes, the European Union has supported the initiative of VISIT (Voluntary Initiative for Sustainability



in Tourism) ([VISIT, 2015](#)), which brings together 12 European eco schemes and sets a common standard.

5. Certification that promotes sustainable tourism is mainly based on the following three aspects: 1) the environmental performance of companies, business operations and destinations; 2) the quality of products/services; and 3) the corporate social responsibility of business processes ([UNWTO, 2003](#)).

Global and most abundant tourism certification program, Green Globe 21, based on the principles of Agenda 21 and ISO standards, is the only principle of sustainable development which is applied to tourism and travel ([Bohdanowicz et al., 2005](#)). It tries to provide a program of action for sustainable tourism and to encourage a gradual improvement of individual performance of hotel companies, while not disturbing the already established standards. This initiative offers hotels, and all other tourism enterprises, to commit themselves to reducing the level of environmental impact, but also the opportunity to gain a certificate based on the implementation and verification process or system that can deal with this influence ([WWF-UK, 2000](#)).

Certification of sustainable tourism provides tourists a choice that is environmentally and socially responsible, helping users to find out which hotel companies are indeed socially and environmentally responsible, and to make choices based on that, raise public awareness about responsible hotel practices, improve hotel service and contribute to reputation of the hotel ([Bien, 2006](#)). However, at this point, the reference of sustainable tourism in the hotel enterprises can be recognized only if there is a high level of consciousness development about the importance of this kind of tourism. Although the Green Globe 21 is applicable to all organizations of the tourism industry, the majority of them do not recognize the standardization of sustainable tourism as the best way to improve the hotel's environmental and social performance ([Honey, 2002](#)) and gaining recognisability.

For each hotel, the ISO certification means business with the expectation maintenance of the strictly business processes in compliance with the principles of the quality management and respect for documented quality management standards.

The benefits that the hotel has after the implementation of ISO 9001: 2008 are ([Ashly, 2014](#)):

- Certificate helps hotel to improve its business, motivate employees and improve marketing;
- Accredited hotel companies have operational advantages;
- Accredited ISO 9001 certification is a tool that any type of hotel, large or small, can use to do business more efficiently and effectively;
- Quality Management System increases the overall performance standards and operational procedures;
- Implementation of ISO 9001: 2008 provides continuous improvement in the quality management system of hotel organization and all its processes;
- ISO 9001 is well proved to be the primary means of waste and risk reduction, while at the same time increases consumer confidence and business performance.

The moral, ethical, social and political arguments for taking action on environmental issues are becoming more convincing and widely accepted. Hotel industry also monitors and fulfils various initiatives for the welfare and protection of the environment, and thereby builds a positive image for itself. Some hotel organizations have gone further and adopted internationally recognized environmental standards like the ISO 14001 system of environmental management. This standard provides a variety of benefits for a hotel company, and some of those are:

- ISO 14001 has positive impact on the identification of performance indicators and enables the hotel to recognize ways for saving energy and reduce waste or manage it;
- This standard helps hotel organization to continuously improve environmental performance and financial performance;
- Increases competencies in the hotel industry;
- Reduces costs through energy consumption, raw material input, waste management, environmental impact and improves the public image;
- Improves economic performance and at the same time improves the performance of the immediate environment.

Energy management systems, ISO 50001, offers to a hotel company systematic approach and recognized framework for monitoring and reducing energy consumption. Standard energy management has a number of requirements, from the adoption of energy policy with measurable objectives,

taking action to monitor and reduce energy consumption, to verification of energy savings and planning improvements. If the hotels implement and meet the requirements of this standard, these will be the benefits:

- Increased employee awareness about energy issues, employees are encouraged toward behavioural changes that will support energy management in the hotel;
- Helps hotel to achieve the objectives of energy performance;
- Rational use of energy resources so that hotel could operate efficiently;
- Improvement of energy performance and cost reduction, which contributes to fulfilment and overcoming the expectations of guests;
- Creates transparency and facilitates communication within the organization regarding the management of energy resources;
- Provides a framework for the promotion of energy efficiency in the supply chain;
- ISO 50001 assures guests that the efficient use of energy is one of the main priorities.

The quality of hotel services is one of the safe ways of achieving competitive advantages in the hotel industry. The most common reasons of quality certification are: customer demand, improved efficiency, increased market share, raised awareness of the quality, increased competitiveness, process standardization, improved service quality and customer satisfaction.

When it comes to hotel companies, the reasons for certification are both internal and external (Dick et al., 2013). The internal reasons are related to the processes, procedures and people within the organization. These reasons include improving efficiency, product/services, quality processes and procedures, raising awareness about the quality and reduce the incidents and complaints. External reasons include competitive advantage, greater market share, and customer satisfaction requirements, pressure from clients, and direct entry into new markets. According to research by the University of Kent, if the internal factors opting for certification, implementation of quality requirements are deeper and more detailed, the tools for improving performance are more complete. On the other hand, when certified standard are implemented only for the reasons stated in theory, implementation is superficial, and in practice this means more costs than benefits for the organization.

The mentioned survey, conducted among hotel companies, shows that the reasons for certification are crucial for successful implementation of the standard requirements and, consequently, the achievement of improving satisfaction with the quality of hotel services. Raising awareness about the importance of quality and standardization, as well as increased guest satisfaction (which has been characterized as an external reason), have led to internal reasons of standardization.

The results indicate that the said two groups of hotel companies do not reap the same benefits that the hotel has owing to standardization. System employed with more motivation to improve hotel operations, reveals more benefits from standardized process. When the certification is conducted for reasons that are coming out of hotel organization, motivation is lower, and the benefits are less obvious.

Hotels that assessed internal reasons as critical to the implementation of certification, have a significantly higher assessment in use of the seven quality tools: the cost of non-conformities, internal audit, quality and procedures manuals, a register of complaints, statistics, internal training and register of the incident. Thus, one can conclude that hotels that want a certificate for internal reasons often use these quality tools.

For hotels it is important that managers understand that, although external factors can bring certain benefits of certification, internal factors are essential to achieving greater overall benefits through the evolution of its quality management system and use of the application tools for quality improvement. In other words, the commitment of management to internal factors facilitating the proper implementation of the certification is very important as it results in the realization of external factors such as competition, customer loyalty, better reputation, new markets, higher productivity.

Unfortunately, without significant efforts in the direction of standardization, complexity of hotel processes will continuously increase for years. Globalization brings new demands and characteristics of hotel services, dyed with different cultures, customs and geographic specificities, which the hotel's operating systems, management procedures and operational tools will encounter. If the process of integrating new requirements and needs is not planned and systematically carried out in the manner prescribed

by the standard, the operating performance of the hotel complex process will be more complicated.

Non-standardized systems, processes and solutions restrict the ability of hotels to consistently provide services and meet the demands and needs of our guests and also hinder innovation, which are crucial to improving the quality of hotel services in the very demanding global environment.

Hotels that have understood the importance of innovation for improving the quality of hotel services will be able to use standardized procedures as well as the multiplier of positive effects of innovation, both on the customer and the hotel organization as a whole. The modern consumer of tourist services requires all personalized services, has more and more developed awareness of quality, clearly knows what he wants and expects, is well informed about the supply and quality of tourism organizations, as well as its rights. If tourism organizations, and among them the hotel companies, do not accept this more intensive changes in the tourism market and do not adapt their business in the direction of fulfillment of the new requirements, they will not be able to improve their competitiveness.

## CONCLUSION

Tourism and hotel industry today represent a serious financial industry, that will become with its potential in the future more significant for the global economy. The reason for this lies in the fact that new tourist destinations appeared at the hotel market, in up to now insufficiently attractive regions which are thus enabled to get their economies on a higher level. Increased competition in the aviation sector offers significant support to the growth of tourism and hospitality which thus enables faster and more efficient transport of people to desired destination.

In order to survive on the market, hotel enterprises have to adjust to the new requirements of the global market and service users, through the introduction of innovation in their business which reflects in the following steps:

- creating hotel brands;
- application of franchising and management contracts;
- use of ICT in business of the hotel industry;
- introduction of standards in the operation of hotel enterprises.

Users of hotel services are critical factor affecting the change of business hotel enterprises. Today, they are very well informed about the destinations to which they travel and about the hotels they stay in. However, the categories of benefits of hotel services is deeply divided over the segments, because the society and technology were both developed and new patterns of behavior and attitudes thus appeared.

As a result of customer care services, hotel companies are introducing international standards (ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO 50001), and standards designed for the hospitality industry and, thus, in such a way they are trying to meet the demands of their consumers. Hotel companies by introduction of international hotel standards provide the following benefits: potential customers are guaranteed the quality of hotel services, increase in market share, improved business efficiency and the like.

Therefore, cooperation between hotel and tourist organizations, chambers of commerce and other trading organizations appears to be necessary in order to encourage innovation in the hotel industry, as an important benchmark for rising of competitiveness in the hotel industry.

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