COMMERCIALIZATION OF RURAL TOURING PRODUCT

COMERCIALIZAREA PRODUSULUI TURISTIC RURAL

FLORENTINA MIU[1]

[1] ***University of Pitesti, Faculty of Economics, Piteşti, Romania***
miu_florentina@yahoo.com

Abstract: *Commercialization is the art of communicating through tangible things. The goal of commercialization is to offer visual information motivating the appearance of certain experiences such as: holidays, visits to natural objectives of great attraction, festivals, touring boarding houses etc. Commercialization has the potential of connecting several companies and the benefit of projecting the image of a complex and unitary touring experience*

Key words: *private entrepreneurs, competition, attractiveness of touring resources, camping.*

INTRODUCTION

The product in rural tourism is the essential element of the marketing mix, all the other elements of the marketing mix being determined strictly by it because the product is distributed, promoted and also the price is set for it.

Likewise, the touring product must satisfy the diversity of consumers' needs and because of this, in order to gain a profit, "the producer" must determine the multidimensional nature of consumption and offer demand only for those products that are required by the tourists.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In the European countries with experience in rural tourism, forms of partnership between the city council and private entrepreneurs were highlighted for the extension and diversification of recreation, to which training forms of the animators and recognition forms of this profession were added.

The quality of the touring product is directly connected to the exploitation of the patrimony of the area, by this understanding also the natural resources, the infrastructure and especially the quality of human resources in the areas involved in rural tourism activity.

The product in rural tourism can be conceived so as to make the connection with previously obtained information with regard to:

§ **Tourists** (consumers) – in this case a segmentation of the market is searched by using criteria of age, profession/job, place of residence, incomes, habits.

§ **The competition** is the existing bond with other similar touring activities, which may contribute to the identification and adjustment of the offer of products and services, customizing and differentiating it from that of the competition.

§ **Touring potential of the area** – assumes good knowledge and use of touring resources in the visited area: natural resources, cultural values, infrastructure, entertainment, historical and religious objectives.

The fundamental elements of the touring product that must be distributed by specialized networks (tourism agencies, tour-operators, etc.) can be summarized as follows:

§ **Attractiveness of the resources in rural area**: climatic, scenic, historical, cultural, touring services, as a motivation to visit the area again;

§ **Infrastructure**: access roads, means of transport, telecommunications, transport services – can be included in the package of services or can be left up to the client;

§ **The reception spaces from rural boarding houses and restaurants**: reception, accommodation and culinary offers – are the main elements of the touring products and represent the pre-requisite of the tourist's returning;

§ **Human resources**: civic education, technical knowledge, professional and cultural, sense of beauty, hospitality (tourism is an industry of hospitality).

Summarizing the characteristics of the product in rural tourism, it must be mentioned that it has to fulfill the exigencies of any other product offered on the market, as well as the following:

- It must have a mark;
- Uniqueness of the product

- The ratio quality/price must be optimum;
- The particularity and originality of local, regional and national touring market;
- The diversity of touring services.

a) Commercialization of accommodation forms

In EU countries, with regard to the accommodation in rural environment, certain evolutions and innovations that can emphasize the following problems are observed, for example[9]:

§ a diminution and ageing of the population are noticed in several European regions which chance to reduce local development, as well as the economic effects of tourists' accommodation in rural area;

§ reconstruction and renovation programs of rural houses are promoted in order to receive the foreigners which suppose an optimal accommodation, modernizations, rearrangement of abodes and a joint offer, for local services. There is also the possibility of starting "gîtes"- shelters that are not necessarily provided the activity of receiving tourists.

§ the application and use mode of the notion of lodging – gîtes – for furnished abodes that are not the object of any control or standardization determine a diminution risk of the importance of name and of its quality guarantees;

Accommodation on farms in rural environment

The accommodation concept is found with all the application alternates on the entire area of EU. It is the last concept that was adopted by the European Federation of Accommodation to Inhabitants in Rural Environment (EUROGÎTES) since 1992.

In EU region, the receiving structures are diverse and differentiated in relation to the specific of the offer: rural tourism, in general, or farm tourism (agro-tourism), circuit, transit, holiday. This way, near the householder's farm there are also other accommodation spaces belonging to an association of householders, to a different private person or to local community. Generally, the accommodation spaces are

[9] Bucur-Sabo, 2006 „ *Touring marketing* ", IRECSON Publishing House, Bucharest, p. 189.

inscribed under a specific quality logo, which corresponds to the association that promotes them.

In **Germany**, the special offer for rural tourism is *Holiday in country farm house,* which reflects the characteristics of the farm, in which the tourism wishes to find small and draught animals, own products, regional specialties, personal contact with the host, typical atmosphere to country farm house. The product *Rural Tourism* is also offered, product that defines all the offers from rural environment, not connected to country farm house. Holidays in farm houses that are non-operating for the agriculture, holidays in holiday houses, private houses, summer houses are offered. Farm accommodation in **France,** in rural environment is of small dimension, diffuse, and the corresponding equipment is administered by the agency of private persons.[10]

Usually, in France there are more typical rural products, represented as follows:

§ **holiday farm,** which comprises the three obligatory receiving elements (accommodation, food, recreation) and addresses to holidays or weekends. Usually, the receiving of tourists (in a small number) is performed in a family atmosphere, and it does not disturb the agricultural activity. To the exterior, the farm must have an agreeable aspect and full of flowers and vegetation, respect the local style; the maximum number of rooms must be five, with a surface of 10 m^2 per room, which must have at least a sanitary squad with shower;

§ **resting places** (gîtes) are shelters laid out in buildings unused for agriculture. These are registered under the mark of *Gîtes de France,* they group over 50,000 holders with approximately 100,000 accommodations and address to the tourists who spend their holiday near a farm or village

In **Spain,** the accommodation in rural environment is provided by means of: rural resting places, equestrian farms, inn-farms, guest

[10] Miu Florentina, *2011, „ Ecotourism and rural tourism",* University of Piteşti Publishing House, p.195

rooms grouped in the Associations *Basque Agro-tourism* and *Balearic Agro-tourism.*

Camping in rural environment

It refers to the role played in France by the Federations of Camping and Touring-Clubs for the promotion of camping equipment by publishing specialized brochures.

Accommodation in rural family holiday villages

In our country, as a structure of touring accommodation, the holiday village has a different significance opposite to the villages in the European Union, developed in the neighborhood of rural settlement. These differ in comparison with certain factors, namely: the differentiation, as socio-economic evolution during the last decades (in Belgium, France), when social tourism had a greater extension. Holiday villages benefit by a partnership with local collectivities and are co-financed from public and social funds.

b) The presentation of alimentary forms is in diverse forms and creates the insurance conditions of a partial or full menu to the tourists in transit or on holiday. Of course, all these alimentary units must observe all the sanitary and fiscal norms and regulations and to observe strict hygiene rules. Generally, these must benefit by certain basic technical-urban facilities (water supply, sorting system, sewage, domestic waste collection), have easy care paving and walls, coated with stone ware and crockery.

c) Presentation of leisure forms

Rural touring product increases its quality and attractiveness by means of leisure and recreation that come to the hand of tourists. In outside built-over areas and in the neighborhood of rural settlement the following leisure activities can be developed:

§ Excursions, short hiking in the forest, on the shore of rivers and lakes;
§ Alpinism and short escalades on the nearby massifs;
§ Excursions in national parks and natural reserves;
§ Sporting hunting and fishing;

§ Practice of skiing, sledging, cycle-tourism, wagon, sledge sightseeing, depending on the season;
§ Practice of light sports: lawn tennis, jogging, mini-golf;
§ Visit of some cultural objectives: monasteries, village museums, memorial houses, water mills;
§ Participation in some cultural-artistic activities, competitions, festivals.

RESULTS AND DISCUTIONS

The thematic area of rural touring product can take different aspects, tour organizers being able to develop program versions specialized on rural holidays. Social contacts specific to this environment went from strength to strength, as well as the various short program versions in which the weekend spent on a farm or the thematic programs related to the specificity of the area are also included: hunting, fishing, taking up and practicing riding.

Rural tourism allows carrying out specific activities, which can be classified in two distinct forms of tourism, namely: stay-in and traveling tourism.

Stay-in tourism can offer:

§ close study of nature: observing plants and animals, birds, photographing, filming;
§ hunting, fishing, riding;
§ knowing the ancestral values;
§ participating in festivals, traditions, rural traditions;
§ practicing sports that also require knowledge of natural environment: tourist orientation, motoring, motorcycling or cycling on a varied ground;
§ organizing conventions, symposia, conferences or seminars at various levels;
§ visiting craftsmen' workshops.

Itinerant rural tourism can be organized and spontaneous on its turn. In order to develop this form of tourism, an important role will be played by the existence of an organization or a specialized organizational framework to facilitate the booking system, their confirmation and ensure service supply in conformity with the order received.

§ Gems of Romanian song and dance and the participation in celebrations, social evenings, competitions and folk festivals;

§ Meeting folk craftsmen: potters, furriers, wood carvers etc etc.

§ On the trail of outlaws (woven with outlaw landmarks, inns, popular theater, museum points);

§ Fish trail - in fisheries - with basic services and fishing trips;

§ Wine Road - visiting vineyards and wine tasting;

§ Gastronomic festivals:

§ In the Footsteps of Dracula: visiting the artefacts that remind us of Vlad Tepes and staying overnight in rural areas, with evening campfires and songs, stories around the fire;

§ Visiting: Brătianu, George Enescu, Ciprian Porumbescu, Panait Istrati or other personalities and artistic symbols.

Equally attractive are the circuits and routes that will include parks and nature reserves in mountain areas, caving trails, travel by boat and why not with rafts.

To support and encourage itinerant tourism, the organizers will take into account the need for materials that will be a support and means of presentation, such as: calendar of rural events, guides, maps, monographies, brochures, catalogs.

CONCLUSIONS

The commercialization of rural tourism product can be imagined such as to make the connection with previously obtained information in relation to: tourists (consumers) – in this case, a segmentation of the market is searched by using criteria of age, profession/job, place of residence, incomes, habits; the competition is the existing connection with other similar touring activities, which can contribute to the identification and adjustment of the offer of products and services. By personalizing and differentiating it from that of the competition; the touring potential of the area – supposes good knowledge and use of the touring resources in visited area: natural resources, cultural values, infrastructure, entertainment, historic and religious objectives.

The basic characteristics of the product in rural tourism, which fulfill the exigencies of any other product offered on the market, are the following: it must have a mark; the ratio quality/price must be optimum; there must be

a particularity and originality for local, regional and national touring markets, as well as a diversity of touring services.

REFERENCES

1. **BUCUR-SABO**, **MARIANA** 2006, *Touring marketing*, Irecson Publishing House, Bucharest.
2. **DINU MIHAELA**, 2002, *Geography of Tourism*, Didactic and Pedagogic Publishing House, Bucharest.
3. **FIRTH, TRACEY**., 2004 *Marketing for Sustainable Tourism*, University of Sydney;
4. **GARCIA HENCHE, BLANCA,** 2004, *Rural Touring Marketing*, Irecson Publishing House Bucharest.
5. **GLAVAN VASILE**., 2003, *Rural Touring. Agro-touring. Sustainable Tourism. Ecotourism*, Economic Publishing House, Bucharest.
6. **IELENICZ MIHAI. ET AL**., 2003, *Romania. Touring Encyclopedia* Corint Publishing House, Bucharest.
7. **MANU ION., MIU FLORENTINA**, 2000, *Geography of Tourism*, University of Pitesti Publishing House.
8. **MIU FLORENTINA**, 2008, *Ecotourism and Rural Tourism*, University of Pitesti Publishing House.
9. **MIU FLORENTINA. SIMONI**, **SMARANDA**, 2010, *Ecotourism and Rural Tourism*, (Textbook Fr.) University of Pitesti Publishing House.
10. **MIU FLORENTINA**, 2011, *Ecotourism and Rural Tourism*, University of Pitesti Publishing House
11. **NISTOREANU PUIU, ŢIGU GABRIELA., POPESCU DUMITRU., PĂDUREAN MIHAI.,** 2003, *Ecotourism and rural Tourism*, ASE Publishing House, Bucharest.