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THE USE OF TOURIST MOBILE APPLICATIONS BY THE Y GENERATION

WYKORZYSTANIE APLIKACJI MOBILNYCH W TURYSTYCE PRZEZ PRZEDSTAWICIELI POKOLENIA Y

Summary: Today, mobile technologies have become an inseparable element of travel planning. They give travellers access to all necessary information on an ongoing basis from almost anywhere in the world. The largest group of application users on mobile devices are members of the young generation, in particular Y and Z. The practical goal of the article was to present the ways of using mobile applications in tourism by members of the Y generation. The analysis of the survey results indicated that two-thirds of the respondents used mobile applications to organize a trip, and the rest combined traditional and modern tools in order to achieve the highest efficiency. At the same time, 98.9% of respondents believed that mobile applications would take over a significant part of the tourism market or even dominate the market in the coming years along with the development of their quality and usability. Surveys were conducted among 94 users of these technological solutions and the research results are presented in descriptive and graphic form, and a characterization of the studied generation was also made.

Keywords: Internet, Y generation, Millennials, mobile applications, tourism.

Streszczenie: Współcześnie nieodłącznym elementem planowania wyjazdów stały się technologie mobilne. Pozwalają one podróżnym na bieżący dostęp do wszystkich niezbędnych informacji z każdego miejsca na świecie. Największą grupę użytkowników aplikacji na urządzeniach mobilnych stanowią przedstawiciele młodego pokolenia, a szczególnie Y i Z. W artykule przedstawiono wykorzystanie aplikacji mobilnych w turystyce przez przedstawicieli pokolenia Y. Analiza wyników badań sondażowych wskazała, że 2/3 ankietowanych korzystało z aplikacji mobilnych w celu organizacji wycieczki, a reszta łączyła narzędzia tradycyjne z nowoczesnymi w celu uzyskania największej efektywności. Jednocześnie 98,9% respondentów uważało, że aplikacje mobilne przejmą znaczną część rynku turystycznego lub wręcz zdominują rynek w nadchodzących latach wraz z rozwojem ich jakości i użyteczności. Przeprowadzono badania sondażowe wśród 94 użytkowników tych rozwiązań technologicz-

nych, a wyniki badań przedstawiono w formie opisowej i graficznej. Dokonano również cha-rakterystyki badanego pokolenia.

Słowa kluczowe: Internet, generacja Y, milenialsi, mobilne aplikacje, turystyka.

1. Introduction

Global statistics clearly demonstrate the huge development and interest in mobile applications. In 2017 the number of downloaded mobile applications increased by 60% compared to 2015, up to 175 billion downloads. Consumer spending on applications increased by as much as 105% and amounted to USD 86 billion. The time spent by users on applications throughout the year increased by 30%. Every day, consumers spent about three hours on them, and the most in developing markets in countries such as Indonesia, Mexico and Brazil.[1] These trends also apply to the tourism industry. On May 17, 2018 at 4.30 pm 3,979,825,7351 Internet users were reported.[2] Today, almost every purchase of a trip is carried out, at least in part, via the Internet. It is worth noting that even if customers do not make an online booking, they analyse the selected products offered on the web before deciding to go. The multitude of contemporary tourism ventures requires very diverse information. This is directed to different target groups, which are diverse in: age, social and territorial origin, education and being more or less "experienced" in tourism. This is one of the sources of competitive advantages. In the information society it is very important to have advance information, to be the first and better informed [Kosieradzki 2016, p. 69]. In this context, mobile applications have become very helpful. Shopping applications (AliExpress), video streaming applications (e.g. Netflix, on which users spent the most time among all applications), tourist and travel applications (e.g. TripAdvisor, flight line applications), applications for sharing vehicles (e.g. Uber), social applications (e.g. WhatsApp, Messenger, Facebook) enjoyed the greatest interest in the world in 2017.[3] It is worth noting that the tourist market is increasingly moving to the Internet. Today, to buy a trip or a plane ticket, it is enough to search for the relevant information online. It is the Internet that is the main source of information about the tourism market, which creates great opportunities for promotional activities for companies [Werenowska 2016, p. 145].

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[1]   http://www.mobiletrends.pl/raport-2017-roku-rynek-aplikacji-mobilnych-mial-sie-swietnie (access: 5.05.2018).

[2] http://www.worldometers.info/pl/ (access: 27.07.2018).

[3] http://www.mobiletrends.pl/raport-2017-roku-rynek-aplikacji-mobilnych-mial-sie-swietnie (access: 5.05.2018).

2. Characteristics of the Y generation

The development of information and communication technologies has determined changes in the tourism sector. A tourism enterprise that wants to maintain or improve its market position must adapt to the requirements of the dynamically developing e-tourism. Therefore, acquiring clients in the Y generation group requires adapting to their needs, the style of leisure, recreation and the use of the communication channels used by this generation. It is worth noting that the Y generation very actively uses various social media. On Facebook, people aged 15-30 constitute over 60% of all Polish users of this website. Millenials Facebook is "An Internet on the Internet". This website is gradually taking over the functions of other Internet tools, that is Millenials watch a service or company fanpage, instead of sending emails – they send messages via a social network.[4] This is a clear indication for many brands and businesses of how to organize communication with this unique generation.

According to the Gemius / PBI data, in February 2018 four out of ten Internet users, on average, used the Internet via mobile devices on weekends.[5] The Deloitte analysis shows that by the end of 2023, more than 90% of adults in developed countries will be using them, and elements of artificial intelligence will be standard equipment.[6] It is worth emphasizing that the Millenials as extremely proficient in new technologies, preferring to organize holidays using the Internet. Before they make a purchase decision, they check the price and opinion of other travellers beforehand. For example, they use price comparison websites, read numerous opinions and comments on specific destinations.

Generation Y organizes their trips using the Internet and applications. It is interesting that in cases of a sense of threat or when the experience does not meet their expectations, they can always find a solution using just a smartphone and ubiquitous information network.

In 2014, Millennials constituted 20% of international travellers. It is estimated that by 2020 the Y generation will have gone on 320 million international trips, which will be a 47% increase compared to 217 million in 2013. It is also interesting that 7% of Y generation respondents in 2014 declared making an airline ticket reservation using a mobile application on a smartphone or a tablet. At the same time an alarming fact emerged that in the same study 43% of Millenials determined the frequency of use of a smartphone as every five minutes.[7] Millennials use their phones both before and during travel – as many as 75% of them use tourist applications, and two-

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[4] https://emplo.pl/blog/pokolenie-y-w-social-media (access: 7.05.2018).

[5] http://www.wirtualnemedia.pl/artykul/korzystanie-z-internetu-przez-polakow-luty-2018-gemius-pbi-raport (access: 10.05.2018).

[6] http://www.wirtualnemedia.pl/artykul/w-2023-roku-sprzedaz-smartfonow-wyniesie-1-85-miliarda-sztuk-w-standarzie-sztuczna-inteligencja (access: 11.05.2018).

[7] https://www.forbes.com/sites/tanyamohn/2014/11/08/the-rising-wave-of-millennial-travelers/2/#22cf7a1418aa (access: 1.05.2018), oraz https://www.wysetc.org (access: 1.05.2018).

thirds of them share their experiences and adventures on a regular basis by posting photos, videos and statuses in social media.[8] The quoted data may be an inspiration for further in-depth research.

2.1. Analysis of Y generation preferences

In the studies presented in the article, an analysis of source and secondary materials was carried out. A diagnostic survey was also used in the considerations. The facts were established be detecting dependencies between phenomena and processes. For the purpose of the article a questionnaire research[9] on the use of mobile applications by Generation Y was carried out in 2017 on a group of 94 respondents born between 1980-2000. The respondents answered a number of questions indicating their preferences in relation to the use of mobile applications in tourism.

It was significant in the study group that almost all the respondents had devices that allowed mobile applications to run (98.1%) and only one person declared that he did not have the appropriate tool and ended his participation in the study. The respondents declared trips for tourism purposes once or twice a year. It is worth noting that these were people who prefer holiday trips focusing on the summer months (July-August) or during winter holidays. There was also a large group of people travelling three to four times a year. This segment was made up of people who, apart from the usual rest periods, go on short trips during public holidays. The last group consisted of tourists who made regular tourist trips even during weekends throughout the year and spontaneously decided to travel. This frequency of trips was caused, among others, by the desire to relax, see new places or simply meet friends in a different environment. It is significant that the respondents used modern methods for organizing trips (64.5%), which shows the trend prevailing among the Y generation. They use traditional methods of organization of trips only in a situation when it is impossible to use mobile devices or to access the Internet. Over one-third of respondents (34.4%) acted in this way. It might be said that despite the significant dominance of technological innovations, there will always be a group of people who appreciate the advantages of the traditional means such as not being dependant on the energy source or the mobile network coverage.

It was very important from the point of view of the conducted research to check whether respondents have installed on their portable device applications that can serve tourist purposes, such as: hotel reservation, planning a trip / sightseeing or buying airline / railway tickets. As many as 75.3% of the respondents admitted that they had such applications and treated them as an attractive addition to a mobile device. In the hands of a modern traveller they are not just phones any more, they change into a multifunctional tool for organizing trips and becoming familiar with the destination.

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[8] http://travelmarketing.pl/milenialsi-kim-sa-co-kupuja-gdzie-podrozuja (access: 17.05. 2018).
[9] The research was carried out by Maciej Rzepka.

3. Preferences of users of mobile applications in tourism

The respondents confirmed the use of tourist mobile applications. The study tested the knowledge of the most popular applications among the respondents. The applications were designed to be used when organizing the trips and during the trips themselves. The Google Maps program has also been taken into account, although it is not closely related to the tourism sector but is often used by travellers for both ease of use and wide coverage.

The analysis of the research results showed that of the nine tourist applications, the most popular was TripAdvisor – 31.4% of respondents declared using it and 47.1% had heard about it. Airbnb, which was recognized by 25.7% of respondents, was used often as well (27.1%). More widely recognized but less widely used applications were: Polska Niezwykła, Google Trips, as well as Polskie Szlaki. However, applications such as Arguido, iPolak, Tour Planner and Lonely Planet were rather unused and unknown to a wider group of respondents. As expected, almost all of the respondents used Google Maps in their everyday life as well as for tourism purposes. Only 2.9% declared the lack of this application on their device. Polish applications have significantly less penetration force in being recognized compared to programs created by foreign companies which can afford to spend significant funds to promote their products as well as provide higher quality and customer service along with constantly developing the product they offer. The respondents were given the opportunity to supplement information by indicating applications used by them but absent in the said top ten. The most frequently mentioned application was Booking.com. This is a program very similar in operation to TripAdvisor offering a search engine for accommodation with the option of booking, allowing users to express their opinion on the stay and offering numerous guidebooks about tourist destinations. Over 1,228,481 objects in 228 countries and territories have been registered on the Booking.com platform.[10] Another choice of the respondents was a couch-surfing program very similar to Airbnb, offering accommodation organized by local residents. The same number of people mentioned the Trivago app as offering the same service as Booking.com and TripAdvisor. The following applications were also mentioned: Mapa Turystyczna, Jakdojadę and Atlas Szlaków. It is worth noting that the respondents used tourist applications more often during national journeys (70%). This result may reflect the frequency of foreign trips of Polish tourists. In turn, the results of surveys conducted in 2017 by Ipsos Poland regarding holiday plans of Poles show that they are more willing to take domestic holidays (74%) than foreign ones (26%)[11] which should be an inspiration for the creators of national mobile applications.

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[10] https://www.booking.com/content/about.pl.html?label=gen173nr-1FCAEoggJCAlhYSD-NiBW5vcmVmaLYBiAEBmAEewgEKd2luZG93cyAxMMgBD9gBAegBAfgBC5ICAXmo AgM;sid=fbd8d82c547a43f96da5f8e940e67340 (access: 4.05.2018).

[11] https://turystyka.wp.pl/wakacje-2017-r-znamy-plany-polakow-6130760385497217a   (access: 2.05.2018).

3.1. Reasons for the reluctance to use mobile applications

Not all respondents had the analysed applications on their devices, as declared by 23 people. An important point for the considerations was to indicate the reasons for the reluctance to use such applications. The main reason for not using the application was the use of the website of the tourist object or travel agency (78.3%). Additionally, many respondents had concerns regarding the security of banking data (34.8%) and personal data (13%). There is still a large group of tourists who prefer only traditional methods of organizing leisure (26.1%). Among the reasons for not using the applications, the respondents indicated the lack of intuitiveness of mobile applications (13%) and the lack of technical capabilities in handling interesting tourist applications (8.7%). Some of them showed a distrust in modern technologies (4.3%). Considering the above, it should be stated that the biggest competition for mobile tourist applications are websites from which they mostly originate. Smartphone users do not often want to waste time downloading applications so they use the browser to access the information sought through the website. Every tour operator has a website, so it is important not only to have one, but the way the website is managed is also essential. The more intuitive the website the easier the navigation, the more information, the more likely the client will book a trip via the Internet.

The other reasons were related to transaction security, an attachment to traditional methods. The security of personal data and the non-intuitiveness of the application were slightly less appreciated as these problems are being constantly improved by companies on the basis of feedback from users. Marginal choices were the problems resulting from outdated equipment which will soon disappear completely with the replacement of old worn out devices with new ones and the lack of trust in modern technologies, which is also just a matter of time.

Over half of the respondents (60%) in the situation of elimination of barriers declared that in future they will use the applications and enjoy the advantages and facilities they offer. This is a large group of potential customers and users for companies that create travel applications.

Forecasting the prospects of mobile applications most respondents stated that in future they will take over a significant part of the market (81%). However, traditional tools and interpersonal contact will always play a role and no application can replace it. The others stated that applications are the future of tourism development and will dominate this market.

4. Conclusion

The subject of the analysis was the use of tourist mobile applications by members of the Y generation. In the light of the analysis of the conducted research it turned out that the application most often used by people participating in the survey was TripAdvisor. It can be assumed that this has most likely happened as a result of

marketing activities as well as the large social trust resulting from the company's long-standing position in the market. It should be noted that almost two-thirds of the respondents used mobile applications to organize a trip and the rest combined traditional and modern tools in order to achieve the highest efficiency of activities carried out in this area. Almost all the respondents were convinced about the dominance of mobile applications in the tourist market and the improvement of their quality and usability. The coming years will show whether traditional methods of organisation of leisure will survive or become history. With the above in mind, the research in the analysed field should be expanded.

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