

THE IMPORTANCE OF PHONE AND INTERNET SERVICES FOR TOURISM

IVANIC ALEXANDRU¹, BLAGA CĂTĂLIN², AGAPE ȘTEFANIA VERONICA²,
DUMITRESCU CARMEN SIMONA², CONSTANTINESCU SIMONA CRISTINA^{*2}

¹University of Life Sciences „King Mihai I” from Timisoara,
Faculty of Food Engineering, Romania

²University of Life Sciences „King Mihai I” from Timisoara,
Faculty of Management and Rural Tourism, Romania

*Corresponding author's e-mail: simona_constantinescu@usvt.ro

Abstract: In an increasingly digitized world, tourism is no exception to the need to adapt to new technologies and constantly innovate to attract and retain customers. Optimizing tourism services in Romania can bring significant benefits for both tourists and industry operators. In the digital age, online presence is essential for any business, and tourism is no exception. The use of online platforms and mobile applications can significantly simplify and improve the experience of tourists.

Key words: digitized world, new technologies, tourists, online presence

INTRODUCTION

Social media is on the rise as a marketing tool used by tourism companies. This is due to the fact that online platforms offer access to an unlimited number of users, using limited financial resources. In other words, promotional activities can reach an infinite number of people, the costs for this being lower than in the case of a traditional marketing strategy. [2,3,5,7,11]

Internet access has fundamentally changed the perception of tourists regarding the possibilities of information on the tourism market. Access to content is open to everyone and is quick and easy. Thus, it is important for providers in the tourism industry to create a good reputation in the online environment. [1,7,11,13,14,15]

Tourism companies build their marketing strategies based on social media activity. To a greater or lesser extent, they are somehow forced to evolve and develop in the online environment, evolving with society. They are even conducting some research on the factors in social media that have a strong impact on tourism consumers, as well as how they could use the online environment as a competitive advantage and a tool to stimulate sales. [4,6,7,9,16]

Social media has power over the future of the tourism company, and can contribute to the rise or decline of travel agencies. Consumers are gaining influence, and the online environment can become more powerful than the traditional marketing environment. [3,5]

In relation to tourism, companies no longer have total control over their image or the products presented, which are strongly influenced by users. The information provided by the company is only a base on which consumer opinions and feedback are developed. Social media involves communities of people who gather and share information, knowledge and opinions. [8,13,14]

All this is possible thanks to social media platforms, which make it possible to easily create and transmit text, video, audio content, etc. [10,12,14]

The online environment is relevant to the tourism activity because this is an industry based on the transmission of information, on the promotion of the offer. All those interested can obtain information and assistance in the process of planning a trip and making decisions based on relevant information about destinations, accommodation, restaurants and tourist attractions in the area. [15]

The tourist experience cannot be evaluated by a potential client, being intangible. Therefore, the interested party places great emphasis on the recommendations of those who

have gone through the respective tourist experience. Tourists offer other tourists information and advice, in real time and on the subject. [13]

Tourism organizations place great emphasis on the image created in the online environment. [1,12,16]

They tend to form their own community of tourists, which they can involve in the process of promoting the products and services offered, taking advantage of the positive feedback of satisfied customers. [4,6]

Online marketing is an easier, more accessible and easier to understand solution for potential customers, but also a cheaper solution. The costs for online promotion, for market prospecting activities, but also all the elements involved in creating a strong brand, are much lower than in the case of a traditional marketing campaign. [13,15,16]

Consumers gain trust much faster in a company that they can find out about online. Therefore, all the reviews received are very important. The communication channel is no longer limited to provider-consumer, but extends to consumer-consumer, consumer-provider and even provider-provider. Travel agencies are stimulated to use social media to encourage conversation and interaction between tourists. This involvement generates loyalty, increases interest in the tourism product offered and stimulates the consumer's decision to purchase the tourism package. [2,11,13]

MATERIAL AND METHOD

In order to have an image of mobile and internet services in Romania, we have resorted to analyzing the most important economic indicators of several companies that offer internet and mobile telephony services in our country. For this, we have resorted to public information from www.listafirme.ro, taking for analysis the most important companies in the country, in our opinion, that offer such services, namely Vodafone, Orange, Telekom and DIGI. We have analyzed, from a financial point of view, the evolution of these companies during the period 2020-2024.

In order to identify and analyze the level of satisfaction of the population with regard to mobile telephony and internet services, we used the questionnaire method. The questionnaire was applied in the municipality of Arad, on a number of 2370 people surveyed, during the period 04.03.2024 - 05.06.2024. The applied questionnaire can be found in the appendix and below we will present the information obtained by processing the questionnaire.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

As we can see from the figure below (fig.1.), all four companies that offer mobile telephony and internet services have a positive turnover, but the only company whose turnover is increasing is Telekom, while all other companies are decreasing. In terms of the size of this turnover, we find that Orange is the best on the market.

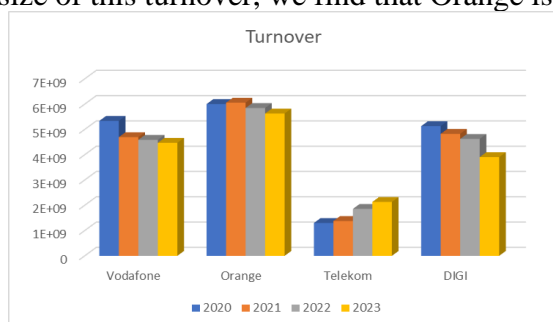


Figure 1. Turnover

Source: data interpretation after processing the questionnaire

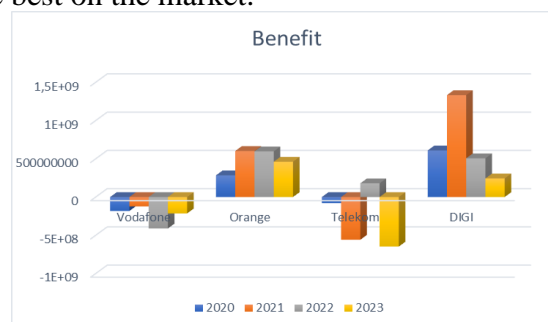


Figure 2. Benefit

Source: data interpretation after processing the questionnaire

The same cannot be said about the profit of the companies taken into analysis. According to the figure above (fig.2) we note that two companies declared a negative profit for the analyzed period, namely Vodafone which declared a negative profit for the entire analyzed period and Telekom had a negative profit for three years (2020, 2021, 2023). Regarding equity, the situation is as can be seen in figure 3:

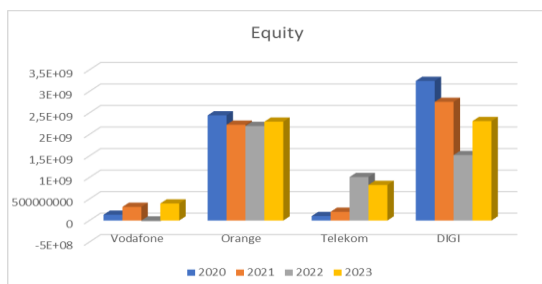


Figure 3. Equity

Source: data interpretation after processing the questionnaire

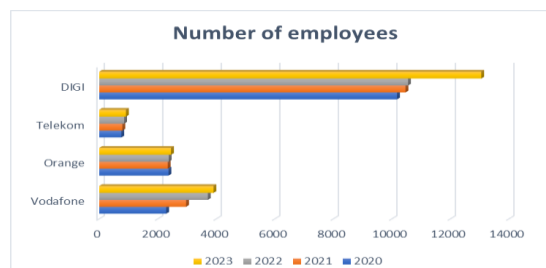


Figure 4. Number of employees

Source: data interpretation after processing the questionnaire

In 2022, Vodafone declared negative equity, according to www.listafirme.ro. The number of employees is increasing, to a greater or lesser extent, in all companies analyzed, which demonstrates an increase in the population's interest in these services, according to Figure 4.

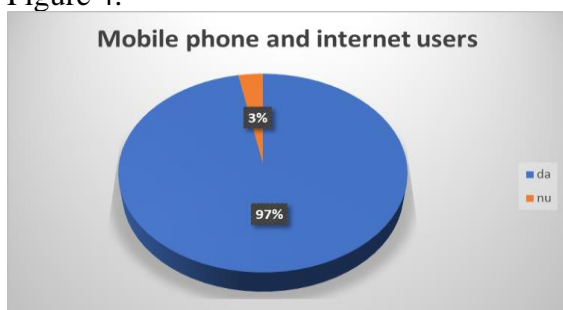


Figure 5. Mobile phone and internet users

Source: data interpretation after processing the questionnaire

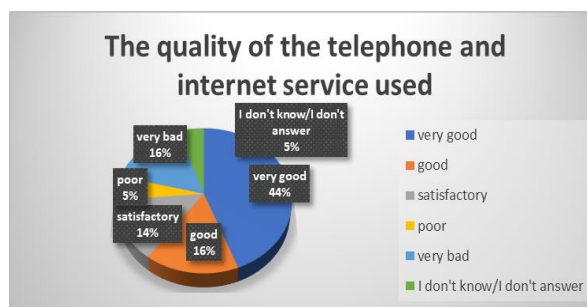


Figure 6. The quality of the telephone and internet service used

Source: data interpretation after processing the questionnaire

As can be seen from Figure 5, 97% of the people interviewed are mobile phone users. Also, from Figure 6, we can note that the degree of satisfaction of mobile service users is very high, with a fairly small number of interviewees (21%) declaring themselves dissatisfied with this service and a percentage of 5% refusing to answer the question.

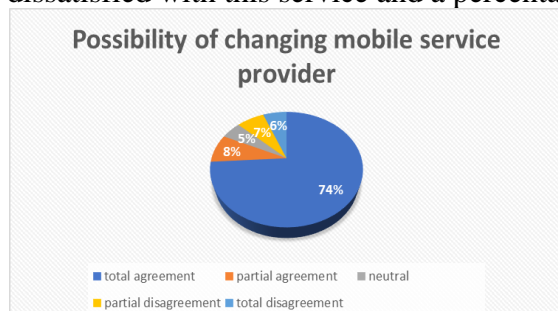


Figure 7. Possibility of changing mobile service provider

Source: data interpretation after processing the questionnaire



Figure 8. Clarity in understanding the offer

Source: data interpretation after processing the questionnaire

Users of mobile telephony services are informed, to the greatest extent possible, of the possibility of changing the provider of such services in the event of some degree of dissatisfaction with the services that this provider offers. Regarding the clarity in understanding the offer of mobile telephony services, here we can notice some difficulty in understanding this aspect.

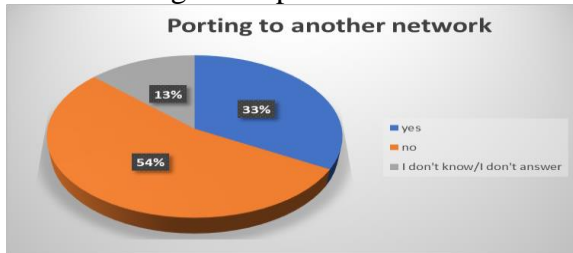


Figure 9. Porting to another network
 Source: data interpretation after processing the questionnaire

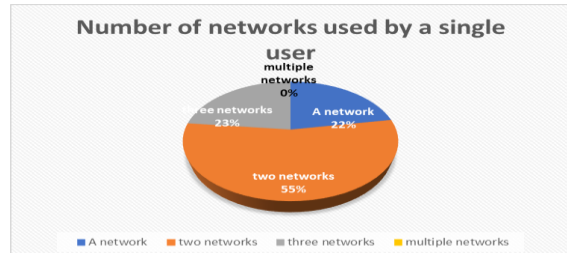


Figure 10. Number of networks used by a single user
 Source: data interpretation after processing the questionnaire

We can observe a fairly high level of satisfaction with telephone services and the chosen operator, with a relatively small percentage (33%) of those interviewed declaring that they had resorted to porting to another network and 13% refusing to answer the question. The majority of those who responded to our questionnaire turned out to be users of multiple mobile networks at the same time. Most use two networks, followed by those who are users of three mobile networks. None of the people interviewed stated that they would use more than three networks at the same time.

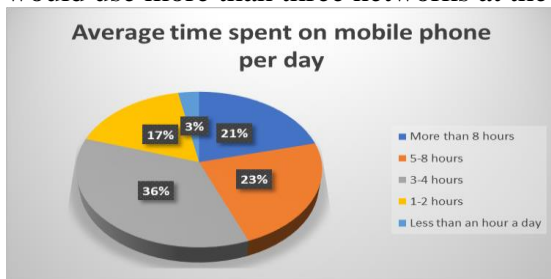


Figure 11. Average time spent on mobile phone per day
 Source: data interpretation after processing the questionnaire

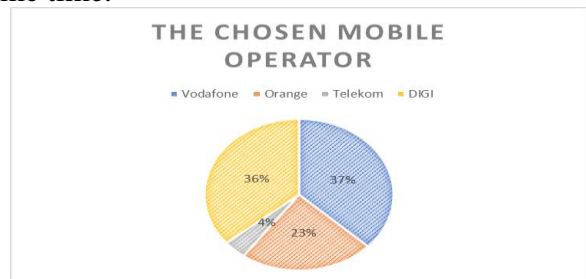


Figure 12. The chosen mobile operator
 Source: data interpretation after processing the questionnaire

As mobile operators, we note that the largest share among those interviewed is occupied by DIGI, due to the low tariffs in their offer, followed by Vodafone, Orange and Telekom.

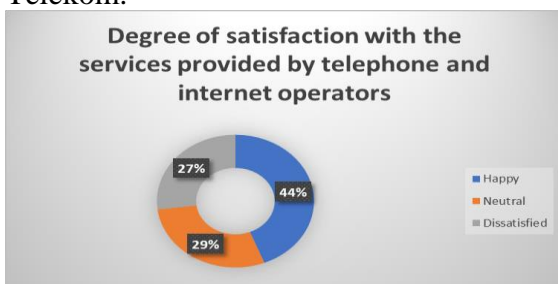


Figure 13. Degree of satisfaction with the services provided by telephone and internet operators
 Source: data interpretation after processing the questionnaire

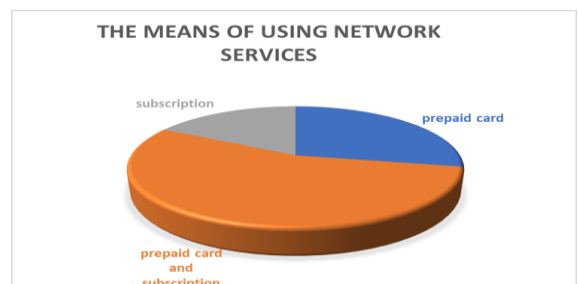


Figure 14. The means of using network services
 Source: data interpretation after processing the questionnaire

questionnaire

We can observe a relatively high level of satisfaction with the services offered by the chosen mobile operator. We also note that 27% of those surveyed offered to remain neutral when asked about their level of satisfaction with the services offered.

Taking into account the fact that many of those who answered our questions are users of multiple telephone networks, we also note that they resort to using both subscriptions and mobile phone cards in parallel as a means of using network services.

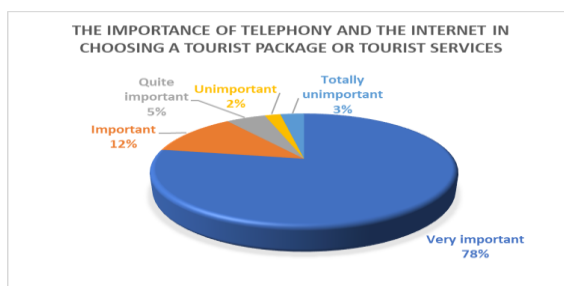


Figure 15. The importance of telephony and the internet in choosing a tourist package or tourist services

Source: data interpretation after processing the questionnaire

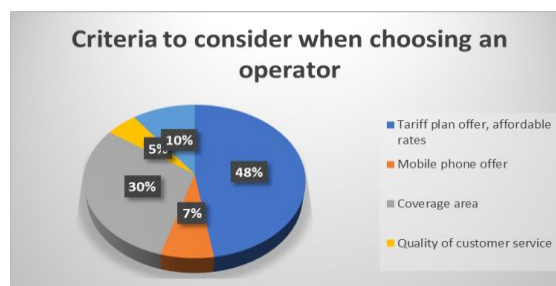


Figure 16. Criteria to consider when choosing an operator

Source: data interpretation after processing the questionnaire

As can be seen, telephone and internet service has become, at present, an indispensable service in daily life and activity. 78% of those interviewed give great importance to this service, a very small percentage considering it of low importance – 5% (2% unimportant and 3% totally unimportant).

Most people when choosing a mobile operator take into account the tariff plan offer and the tariffs charged. Many choose the operator based on the coverage area of this service and the quality of the data communications service. A fairly important role is also played by the operator's offer of mobile phones and mobile telephony services. The quality of customer service is not very important for consumers, as can be seen from figure 16.

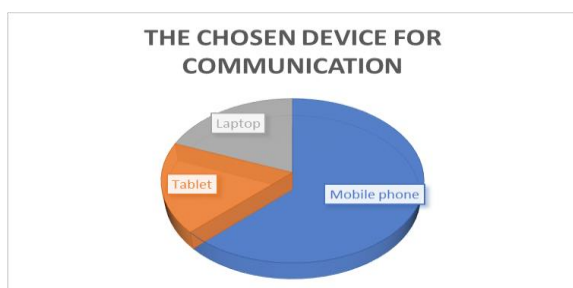


Figure 17. The importance of telephony and the internet in choosing a tourist package or tourist services

Source: data interpretation after processing the questionnaire

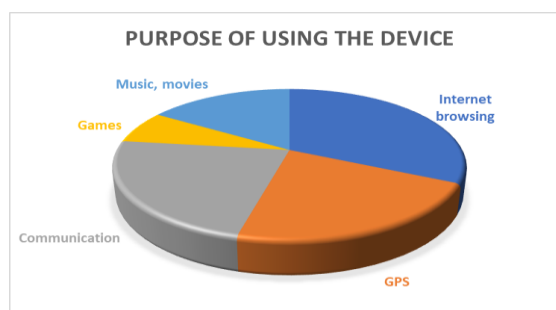


Figure 18. Purpose of using the device

Source: data interpretation after processing the questionnaire

The chosen devices are used, to a large extent, for internet browsing and communication. They are also largely used for GPS. To a lesser extent, these devices are used for watching movies or listening to music or for certain online games, especially by the young population.

Regarding the gender of those who responded to our questions, the share was approximately equal between females and males. By age category, most respondents fell

into the 26-44 age category, followed by those aged 45-59. Most respondents come from urban areas and are part of the category of those with higher, university and postgraduate education.

CONCLUSIONS

The best service, regardless of its nature, is the one that helps you in the way you want. In terms of mobile telephony, this service includes that operator whose signal and internet speed are those that you need and are necessary for you to achieve your goals. Obviously, all of this offered at prices that you can afford. Therefore, the operator that offers the consumer of mobile telephony and internet services the best services at the best quality-price ratio. Our communication needs as people are different just as we, as individuals, are different from each other, so, taking into account these aspects, we can say that everyone knows what is best for him, therefore he will choose, from this point of view, the best mobile telephony operator.

A company, in order to be considered to have the best network, must offer extensive coverage of its services, at a national level and the services it offers must be available in the most isolated and remote areas of the country.

The parameters of a GSM signal, as well as the intensity of this signal, are essential factors for a special quality of services offered by operators, especially voice services. The reliable mobile network offers clear quality for voice calls as well as stable coverage, regardless of the area, without "shadow areas" and without significant signal losses.

Considering that we live in the digital age, it is essential that mobile internet access be high-speed, with the widest possible coverage and high speed, allowing for web browsing in the best conditions, downloading the necessary or desired content, and using applications without the possibility of interruptions or delays.

In Romania, there is fierce competition between mobile operators, which means that identifying the best network may depend largely on the preferences of each individual, as well as on certain specific needs or on the area in which the consumer of mobile telephony services carries out his daily activity. and identifying the best network may depend on individual preferences, specific needs and the geographical area in which the user carries out his activities. The most important operators in our country are Vodafone, Orange, Telekom (formerly Cosmote) and DIGI Mobil. Each of them offers its customers its own packages of benefits and services.

In order to determine the best mobile network adapted to individual needs, it is recommended to consult reports prepared by experts and specialists as well as reviews provided by consumers in parallel with analyzing one's own need for use, taking into account, at the same time, some similar experiences of those in the environment or the opinions of users in the area of residence. When choosing a mobile network, one must certainly take into account, first of all, individual and objective criteria, only in this node can the best user experience be ensured.

Regarding 5G technology, Vodafone and Orange are also the leaders in the market for next-generation mobile connections, offering the most extensive coverage along with the remarkable quality of 5G services.

Those who want a good internet connection, the best option is still Vodafone and Orange, which also have the most extensive coverage area, making them the ideal option, while DIGI offers subscriptions accessible to everyone, both for internet and voice.

Before contracting a subscription with one of the mobile operators, it is essential to check the coverage of the voice and internet network in order to make the best choice adapted to individual needs and requirements.

REFERENCES

- [1]. **BELK R., SHERRY J.**, 2007, Consumer culture theory, Bingley: Emerald
- [2]. **BELOHLAVEK A., MLEZIVA L.**, 2012, Protecția consumatorilor, București: C. H. Beck
- [3]. **CONSTANTINESCU SIMONA CRISTINA, DUMITRESCU CARMEN SIMONA, ORBOI MANUELA DORA, CHIȘ S., VASS H.**, 2022, correlation of the quality of spa tourist services with consumer behaviour, Proceedings of the 5th International Scientific Conference on Water
- [4]. **DINU V.**, 2011, Protecția consumatorilor, București: Editura ASE
- [5]. **EVANS M., FOXALL G., JAMAL A.**, 2009, Consumer behaviour, Chichester: John Wiley & Sons
- [6]. **FOXALL G., GOLDSMITH R., BROWN S.**, 2003, Consumer psychology for marketing, London: Thomson
- [7]. **ILIESCU D., PETRE D.**, 2004, Psihologia reclamei și a consumatorului, București: Comunicare.ro
- [8]. **KOTLER P.**, 2010, De la produs la consumator și la spiritul uman, București: Publica.
- [9]. **LEITH P., SLOAN D.**, 2004, Consumer behaviour in the international restaurant sector - Amsterdam: Elsevier
- [10]. **MARTIN SIMONA CRISTINA**, 2014, Serviciile-o provocare a economiei de piață, Timișoara, Editura Eurostampa
- [11]. **SOLOMON M., BAMOSSY G., ASKEGAARD S.**, 2002, Consumer behaviour: a European perspective. Harlow: Prentice Hall
- [12]. **SUTHERLAND M., SYLVESTER A., VASILE A.**, 2008, De la publicitate la consumator: ce "merge", ce "nu merge" și mai ales de ce, Iași: Polirom
- [13]. **TOMESCU IONELA-EVELYNA**, 2017, Rolul platformelor social media în activitatea de marketing turistic, Ecstudent - Revistă de cercetare științifică a studenților economiști, Editura „ACADEMICA BRÂNCUȘI” Târgu Jiu
- [14]. **WRIGHT R.**, 2006, Consumer behaviour. London: Thomson
- [15]. ***www.bibliotecadigitală.ase.ro (accesat mai 2024)
- [16]. ***www.listafirme.ro (accesat mai-iunie 2024)