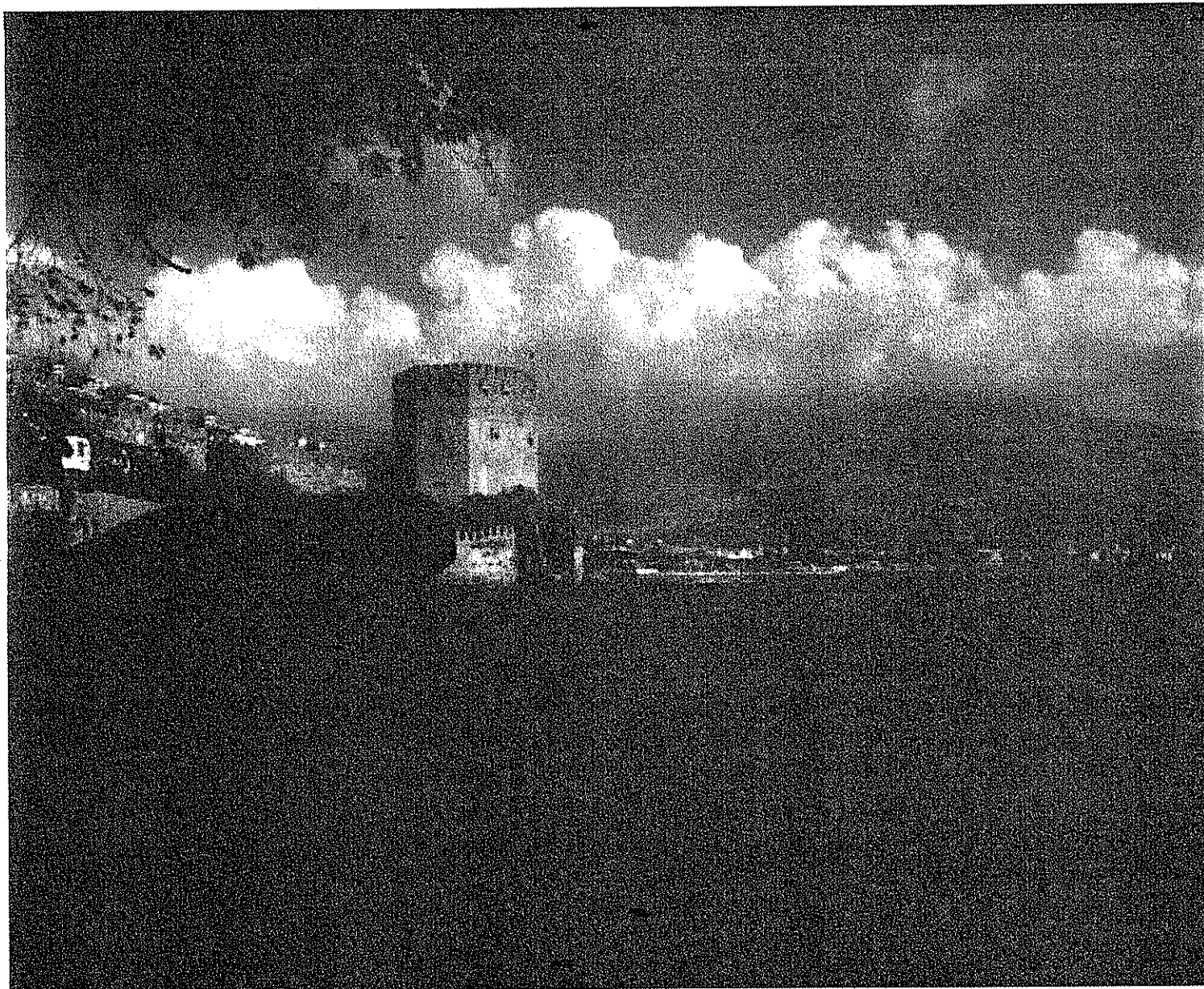


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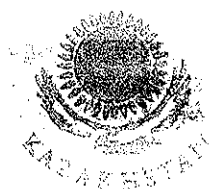
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20-26 November 2006 Alanya - TURKEY



**“New Perspectives and Values in World Tourism
& Tourism Management in the Future**



ORGANIZED BY

Akdeniz University Alanya Faculty of Business

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Prof. Dr. Ahmet AKTAŞ

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Muhammet KESGİN
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

COMMITTEES.....	iii
FOREWORD.....	iv
ÖNSÖZ.....	vi
SUPPORTERS AND SPONSORS.....	viii

International Research Papers

Trends Underpinning Tourism to 2020: Implications for Tourism Management	1
<i>Larry DWYER</i>	
Ongoing and Expected Future Changes in International Tourism	21
<i>Klaus WEIERMAIR</i>	
Tourism Management in A Global and Transnational Perspective	32
<i>Karlheinz WÖHLER</i>	
Consequences of Tourism: Current Issues in an Enduring Discourse.....	44
<i>Geoffrey WALL</i>	
The Role of Theming in Destination Development.....	54
<i>Ady MILMAN</i>	
Tourists, Motivations and Experiences: A Theoretical and Methodological Critique	66
<i>Eugenia WICKENS</i>	
Environmental Ethics: Are They Relevant to Tourism?.....	77
<i>Andrew HOLDEN</i>	
Medical Tourism in Thailand.....	87
<i>Erik COHEN</i>	
Tourism Development and Impacts in The Greater Yellowstone Region, USA.....	118
<i>Jerry JOHNSON</i>	
An Integrative Approach to Image, Investment and Travel Conditions in Central Asia Countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan).....	138
<i>Muzaffer UYSAL, Kemal KANTARCI</i>	
Destination Marketing Meets Clinical Psychology: Trialling A Group Application of Repertory Grid.....	147
<i>Steven PIKE</i>	
Experiential Marketing of Tourism Destinations.....	162
<i>Richard "Rick" M. LAGIEWSKI, Bozana ZEKAN</i>	
Branding of Nations: Country Branding and Some Recent Applications.....	176
<i>Osman GÖK, Gökçe ÖZDEMİR</i>	

Marketing and Promoting Alternative Forms of Tourism as A Key to Local Economic and Social Development – A Case in Crete.....	185
<i>Vasiliki A. AVGELI, Eugenia WICKENS, Manolis GALANAKIS</i>	
Emerging Approaches in Tourism Marketing Management.....	207
<i>Asım SALDAMLI, Özgür ÇENGEL</i>	
Internal Marketing: A Strategic Tool for Destination Competitiveness.....	214
<i>Gökce ÖZDEMİR</i>	
Tourism Manifestations as an Important Segment in Tourism.....	222
<i>Snežana BESERMENJI</i>	
Competition, Cooperation and Coexistence: The Journey of Tourism in Australia's South West Region.....	231
<i>Abhijit GHOSH, Terence L MCVEIGH</i>	
Information Supply in Tourism Management By Marketing Decision Support Systems. The Case of Albania.....	240
<i>Liljana ELMAZI</i>	
Developing a Marketing Communication Strategy for a New Destination Brand: Ancient Comana Cappadociae.....	255
<i>Mehmet Cihan YAVUZ, K. Serdar GİRGİNER</i>	
City Marketing for Tourism: Filyos Case.....	271
<i>Yalçın MEMLUK, Şükran ŞAHİN, Ahmet BENLİY</i>	
Tourist Product Strategy and The Choice of Basic Criteria of The Destination of Vlora-Saranda as A Tourist Product.....	286
<i>Liljana ELMAZI, Evelina BAZINI</i>	
Management and Marketing of Urban Tourism On The Example of Urban Centres in Bačka Region.....	297
<i>Tatjana PIVAC, Kristina KOSIC</i>	
Influence of and to Festivals with Tourism Development: A Case Study of Macao.....	311
<i>Ching-Chi (Cindia) LAM</i>	
Hedonism, Hedonic Consumption and Hedonic Quality in Tourism Industry.....	336
<i>Evrin ÇELTEK</i>	
Roles and Motives of Tourists in The Blooming Economy of "Las Vegas of Asia"- Macao.....	350
<i>Ching-Chi (Cindia) LAM</i>	
Travelers' Behavior and Satisfaction toward Macau Tourism- An Empirical Study of Individual Visitors from Mainland China.....	370
<i>NG, SIO-WANG</i>	

Visitor Profile Study and Economic Impact of Harbour Festival-East London.....	382
<i>Nimish SHUKLA</i>	
Determining The Tourists Visiting Turkey By Their Visiting Purposes Through Cluster Analysis.....	396
<i>Öznur İŞÇİ, Fatma FİDAN, Nevin GÜLER</i>	
Fuzzy Seasonality Forecasting for Tourists Visiting Turkey.....	410
<i>Mübariz EMINOV, Eşref DENİZ</i>	
Determining Quality Levels of Foreign Tourists On The Base of Residence Countries Using Fuzzy Clustering.....	427
<i>Mübariz EMINOV, Nevin GÜLER</i>	
Analysing Host Attitudes Towards Tourism in A Developing Cultural and Historic City: A Case Study of Port Louis, Mauritius.....	442
<i>Robin NUNKOO, Haywantee RAMKISSOON</i>	
Township Tourism On The Periphery of The South African Capital City.....	460
<i>WJL COETZEE</i>	
Tourism Versus Agricultural Development: A Case of The Levubu Tropical Valley.....	472
<i>Hamilton SUMBANA</i>	
Wine Tourism in New Zealand: An Investigation of Winery Visitor Demograph- ics.....	485
<i>Abel ALONSO, David A. COHEN, Rick A. FRASER</i>	
The Competitiveness of Romania as A Tourism Destination.....	503
<i>Cristiana CRISTUREANU, Ana BOBIRCA</i>	
Emergence of Long Run Behaviors in a Game Theoretic Setting with Host and Guest Populations: Residents and Tourists.....	526
<i>Juan Gabriel BRIDA, Elvio ACCINELLI, Lionello F PUNZO, Edgar JS CARRERA</i>	
Tourism With Or Without Commitment.....	543
<i>Lionello F PUNZO, Elvio ACCINELLI, Juan Gabriel BRIDA, Edgar JS CARRERA</i>	
A Simple Mathematical Model for The Effects of The Growth of Tourism On Environ- ment.....	551
<i>Laura SINAY, Leon SINAY</i>	
The Effects on Environmental Investment of Changes in Tourism Demand.....	564
<i>Edgar JS CARRERA, Elvio ACCINELLI, Juan S. PEREYRA, Juan Gabriel BRIDA</i>	
A Decision between Rise and Decline: Sustainable Development of Tourism as An Answer to Tourism's Future.....	575
<i>Ö. Devrim YILMAZ</i>	

An Environmentally Sustainable in Viewpoint of Tourism Market Competitiveness in The Global Settings.....	592
<i>Liljana ELMAZI, Alexandru NEDELEA, Jovan STOJANOSKI</i>	
Sustainable Development of Nautical Tourism in Croatia.....	602
<i>Iva SAGANIĆ, Srećko FAVRO</i>	
The Development of Ecotourism as a Means to Sustainable Development: The Case of Crete – Crucial Success Factors.....	621
<i>Vasiliki A. AVGELI, Eugenia WICKENS, Ioannis SAATSAKIS</i>	
Application of Ecotourism as Co-Management Tool between Park's Administration and Local Community in Taman Negara National Park, Malaysia.....	637
<i>Abdullah MOHD, Yip Hin WAI</i>	
Rethinking Community Participation in Ecotourism Management: The Case of Kafred in Bigodi, Uganda.....	645
<i>Dirisa MULINDWA</i>	
Determining The Environmental Capacity and Capability of Qaledarasi (Castle Valley) in The Arasbaran for Development of Tourism Activities.....	667
<i>Parisa HASHEMPOUR</i>	
Potential for Tourism Ecolabelling in Romania.....	679
<i>Iulian RUSU, Matei MACOVEANU</i>	
An Evaluation of Ecotourism Potential as a Tourism Product in Izmir.....	694
<i>Esin ÖZKAN YÜRÜK, Adnan TÜRKSOY, Selcen Seda TÜRKSOY, Nilgun AVCI</i>	
Perceptions of The Beach Users: A Case Study of The Coastal Areas of The North Cyprus Towards A 'Carrying Capacity' Establishment.....	706
<i>Habib ALIPOUR, Kashif HUSSAIN, Mehmet ALTINAY</i>	
Aspects Concerning Waste Management in Romanian Agrotourism.....	733
<i>Mihai NICU & Fanel APOSTU</i>	
The Survey of The Application of Environmental Management Systems in Hotels....	740
<i>Füsun UYSAL, Sevinç AKTAŞ</i>	
Moroccan Tourism Development Strategy "Vision 2010".....	752
<i>Brahim OUAMANE</i>	
Peculiarities of Tourist Advertising in The Republic of Kazakhstan.....	761
<i>Togzhan MUSSINA</i>	
Prospects of Tourist Cluster Within Almaty City Due to Asian Winter Games in 2011.....	764
<i>S.T. ABDREYEVA Z.M. ABISHEVA</i>	
Prospects of Development Tourism Industry in The Republic of Kazakhstan.....	769
<i>K.S. TURSINBAEVA</i>	

About Prospects of Recreational Development of Russia in The System of The World Tourism.....	776
<i>Olga A. NIKITINA</i>	
Development of Active Tourism On The Ski Spa Resort "Krasnaya Polyana".....	788
<i>Larissa ROMANOVA</i>	
Rural Tourism Business Development in Georgia.....	791
<i>Kakha Nadiradze</i>	
Problems of The State and Regional Politics of Development of Tourism.....	795
<i>A. A. ZHOLDASBEKOV, I. ISMAYLEV</i>	
New Approaches in Tourism for Publicity & Marketing: Proposal for The Design Effects Regarding The Usage of Accommodation Spaces With Examples From Different Regions in Turkey.....	801
<i>Olca ÇETİNER, Ayşegül Ç. GÖKYILMAZ</i>	
Local Agenda 21 and The Role of Local Authorities in Sustainable Tourism.....	816
<i>Ayhan GÖKDENİZ</i>	
Alternative Tourism Facilities in Rural Area of Denizli: An Application of Swot Analyzes.....	833
<i>V. KALINKARA, N. ÇEKAL, S. CEYLAN, N. Selam ÖZDİPÇİNER, M. E. SOYDAŞ</i>	
Applying Norm Activation Model to The Behavior of Tourists in Archaeological Sites.....	842
<i>Mairna MUSTAFA</i>	
The Role of Integrated Quality Management in The Development of Urban Tourism in Albania.....	869
<i>Liljana ELMAZI, Ada KERTUSHA, Evelina BAZINI</i>	
The Potential Role of Golf Tourism in Competitive Development of Turkey Destination.....	878
<i>Reha SAYDAN, Hüseyin KANIBİR</i>	
An Example to Urban Tourism Areas From Istanbul: Ortaköy-Kuruçeşme Line.....	894
<i>Ayşe Nur TIMOR, Hüsnüye DOLDUR</i>	
Place of Caves in Alternative Tourism, Turkey's Potential and Dim Cave.....	902
<i>Yılmaz GÜNER, Fuat ŞAROĞLU</i>	
The Tourism Potential of Istanbul-Kilyos Region and The Applicable Sustainable Tourism Alternatives for The Area.....	915
<i>Gürel CETİN, İsmet AYKUT, M. Tefik İZGİ</i>	
The Importance of Alternate Types of Tourism in The Continuous Development of The Tourism Industry: Antalya Case.....	926
<i>Şule AYDIN, Mustafa BOZ</i>	

Local Capacity Building for Tourism within The Context of Strategic Landscape Planning: Tarsus Coastal Zone Example in Turkey.....	941
<i>Şükran ŞAHİN, Alper ÇABUK, Figen DİLEK</i>	
Media Ethics: An Evaluation of Media's Reaction Based On A Hypothetical Scenario in Tourism.....	953
<i>Burcu Selin YILMAZ</i>	
Determining The Approaches of The Hotel Managers Towards The Employees in Respect of Business Ethics: A Case of Ankara.....	965
<i>İzzet KILINÇ, Şule ERDEM TUZLUKAYA</i>	
Ethic Troubles Faced in Marketing of Travel Sector and its Solution Suggestions (An Area Search in Istanbul).....	976
<i>Burhanettin ZENGİN, Lütfi Mustafa ŞEN</i>	
Environmental Ethics: A Guide to Tourism's Sustainable Development or Failure...1000	
<i>Burcu Selin YILMAZ, Ebru GUNLU</i>	
Global Tourism - A Hobbesian Covenant? The Right to Development V. Indigenous Property Rights.....	1015
<i>Alice DIVER, Jacinta MILLER</i>	
Criminal Millennium and Global Problems of Modern Tourism.....	1024
<i>U. KARABAYEV</i>	
The Terror Risk Perceived By Foreign Tourists in Choosing Destination: The Case of The Eastern Region of Turkey.....	1030
<i>Hüseyin KANIBİR, Reha SAYDAN</i>	
Importance of Communication Strategies in Making Tourism Policies for Countries Which Have Terror Image in the World.....	1046
<i>Bilgehan GÜLTEKİN, Nahit Erdem KÖKER, Şadiye DENİZ</i>	
Reciprocal Trade-A Strategic Tool within the Tourism Sector.....	1060
<i>Frank BATES, Melek AKIN</i>	
Financing Problems of Small and Medium Sized Tourism Businesses and an Application in Bodrum.....	1073
<i>Hüseyin YILMAZ</i>	
Tourism Projects Financing: Public-Private Partnership Model.....	1086
<i>Suat TEKER, Dilek Leblebici TEKER</i>	
Problems and Perspectives of Franchising in Hotel Business of The Republic of Kazakhstan.....	1098
<i>Saltanat RAKYMZHANOVA</i>	
A Measurement of Managers' Perceptions of Knowledge, Skills, and Attributes Based on the ILO's Standardized Occupational Qualifications in The Hospitality and Tourism Sector.....	1104
<i>Kemal KANTARCI, Esra ONAT</i>	

International Hotel General Managers' Perceived Environmental Uncertainty and Their Strategic Management Processes: A Cross-Country Study of Korea and Japan.....	1119
<i>Jeong-Gil CHOI</i>	
Public Relations and Marketing Communication Activities of A Five-Star Hotel in Istanbul.....	1132
<i>İrfan ARIKAN, İlke KAYA</i>	
Self-Assessment System for Hotel Classification.....	1144
<i>Yukihiko OYANAGI, Azuma OHUCHI</i>	
Spanish Hotel Companies: Indebtedness Determinants.....	1156
<i>María Jesús SUCH DEVESEA, Laura PARTE ESTEBAN</i>	
✓ An Investigation Into Facilitating Factors to Transform Hotels Into Learning Organizations.....	1183
<i>Fevzi OKUMUS, İzzet KILINÇ, Umut AVCI</i>	
✓ Determining New Leadership Typologies Criteria for Developing Hotel Managers.....	1193
<i>Meryem AKOĞLAN KOZAK, Erdem KORKMAZ</i>	
✓ Managing The Organizational Culture of Tourism Enterprises With A New Value: Servant-Leadership.....	1210
<i>Mujde KER-DİNÇER, Selin BİTİRİM</i>	
✓ A Research to Determine The Relation Between The Integration Levels and Organizational Commitment of The Staff.....	1224
<i>Rüya EHTİYAR, Filiz ALPER, Yasemin TEKİN</i>	
✓ The Satisfaction and Motivation of Hospitality Employees Related to Their Jobs: A Study At Altinyunus Resort Hotel in Çeşme-Izmir.....	1241
<i>Sabah BALTA</i>	
✓ A Sample Case Study About The Dimensions of Human Resources Strategic Management: "Çırağan Palace Hotel Kempinski Istanbul".....	1251
<i>Orhan AKOVA, Özlem BALABAN, Kazım Ozan ÖZER</i>	
✓ To Be A Woman Employee in Hotel Enterprises.....	1260
<i>Şehnaz DEMİRKOL, Fatma FİDAN</i>	
The Relationship between Outsourcing and Service Quality in Hotel Businesses: A Study at Five Star Hotels.....	1276
<i>Atilla AKBABA, Erkan TAŞKIRAN</i>	
Sporting Event Tourism and Strategic Catering Management (The Example of The 23rd Summer Universiade 2005, Izmir).....	1288
<i>Ayşegül Şan AYTAÇ, Uysal YENİPİNAR</i>	

The Role and Significance of The System of Quality Management in Restaurant Business.....	1299
<i>Tatyana YUDINA, Elena DYUGEVA</i>	
Interpersonal Skills in Hospitality Industry.....	1302
<i>Gulmira YESHMURATOVA</i>	
Improvement of The Personal Policy in The Sphere of Animation Service.....	1308
<i>Elena DYUGEVA, Tatyana YUDINA</i>	
Research of Conflicts and Stresses among Employees of Spar-Hotels.....	1311
<i>Nataliya MATYUSHCHENKO</i>	
Globalization and Cultural Tourism.....	1324
<i>Parvaneh ZIVYAR PARDEIE, Laleh ASHENA</i>	
Tourism as A Cultural Bridge Connecting Turkey & Eu.....	1331
<i>Mustafa TANYERİ, İge PIRNAR</i>	
Promoting Cultural Tourism Across The Mediterranean: An Experience in The Framework of The Eumedis Programme.....	1344
<i>Alfredo De MASSIS, Anna Della VENTURA, Silvia ZUFFI, Giammarco TOSI</i>	
The Effects of Relationship Between Turkey and The European Union to Turkey's Tourism and Future Oriented Expectations.....	1353
<i>Volkan ALTINTAŞ</i>	
European Community-Financed Grants and Opportunities of Using The Grants in Tourism Education: The Tourism Training Project Sample.....	1361
<i>Şerif BALDIRAN</i>	
A Comparative Study into The Satisfaction of Tourism Students With Their Internship.....	1376
<i>Umut AVCI, Yasin BOYLU</i>	
Examination of Doctoral (Ph.D.) Education in National Context.....	1385
<i>Aylin AKTAŞ, Yakın EKİN, Ece ÖMÜRİŞ</i>	
Exporting India's Tourism Education to Developing Countries: Opportunities and Challenges.....	1398
<i>S. C. BAGRI</i>	
Development of English Speaking Skill in Training High Skilled Managers of Tourism.....	1413
<i>BEKOVA E., A.E. DARMENOV</i>	
Maintenance of University Quality of Preparation of Specialists for Sphere of Tourism.....	1419
<i>B. K. BISHIMBAYEV</i>	

An Approach to Curriculum and Course Design Process for Distance Learning.....	1426
<i>Gulzamira USSENBAYEVA</i>	
Tourismology and Scientific-Theoretical Maintenance of Development of Tourist Branch.....	1432
<i>A.N. PYKHAREV</i>	
The Attitudes and Expectations of Employees On Tourism Education Through Internet: A Case Study of Rwanda.....	1438
<i>W. Packiaraja ROBINSON</i>	
An Emprical Research Determining The Managerial Stress Sources of Directors of Higher Education Establishments.....	1452
<i>V.Erdinç ÖREN, Burcu DEMİREL UTKU, Aylin AKTAŞ</i>	
Integral Approach for Small and Medium Sizes Enterprises: Establishment of An Integral Vocational Training Center for Tourism Industry.....	1465
<i>Eylin BABACAN, Banu Saadet ÜNSAL, Levent ATEŞOĞLU</i>	
Anger & Anger Control: A Research About Students Attending Undergraduate Tourism Programs.....	1479
<i>Ebru TARCAN İCİGEN, Ece OMURIŞ, Yakın EKİN</i>	
How Do Undergraduate Tourism Students Perceive The Impacts of Tourism Development? A Case Study in Turkey.....	1489
<i>Sevgin AKIŞ RONEY</i>	
Burnout Syndrome: Examination of Professional Burnout in The Teachers of Vocational High Schools of Tourism.....	1501
<i>Burcu DEMİREL UTKU, V. Erdinç ÖREN, Ebru TARCAN İCİGEN</i>	
ICT-Driven Transformation and Growth in The Tourism Industry-A Business Model Perspective: The Case of Albania.....	1511
<i>Liljana ELMAZI, Areti STRINGA</i>	
The Role of Information Technology in Albanian Tourism Industry: The Case of Tiscover.....	1524
<i>Liljana ELMAZI</i>	
About The Development of Innovational Information Technology in Kazakhstan Tourism.....	1538
<i>Onalbek ZHARILKASIN, Bakhyt SYDYKOV, Kamalbek Meirbekuly BERKINBAYEV</i>	
Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) -Tool for Growth and Employment in Tourism: The Cases of Albania and Macedonia.....	1542
<i>Liljana ELMAZI, Jovan STOJANOSKI</i>	
Internet Role in Marketing Strategy of Ports of Nautical Tourism in Albania and Romania.....	1557
<i>Alexandru NEDELEA, Liljana ELMAZI</i>	

✓ Sporting Event Tourism Management and Information Technology Applications (The Example of The 23rd Summer Universiade 2005, Izmir, Turkey).....	1565
<i>Uysal YENİPINAR</i>	
The Effect and Usage of Developments in Information Technology On Service Market- ing: Examples in Tourism Industry.....	1577
<i>Serpil YILMAZ, Hatice Gökçen OCAL</i>	
Virtual Tourist Guide Approaches in Tourism and An Implementation for Museums.....	1596
<i>Yasar Guneri SAHİN</i>	
Opinions and Perceptions of Travel Professionals and Internet User's About Hotel Web-Site Characteristics: A Focus Group Study.....	1605
<i>Işıl ÖZGEN, Mehmet AKSARAYLI</i>	
The Usage of Internet On The Communication Activities for Promotion of Countries: Comparative Analysis of Web Sites of Turkey, Spain and United Arab Emirates (Dubai) Ministries of Tourism.....	1617
<i>Bilgehan GÜLTEKİN, Nahit Erdem KÖKER, Eylin BABACAN</i>	
An Evaluation On Online Reservation Web Sites.....	1635
<i>Seden ALGÜR, Ceylan ERDOĞAN, Ece ÖMÜRİŞ</i>	
Problems Of Development of Ecological Tourism As Alternatives Of Economic Activities In Buffer Zones of Natural Reserves.....	1649
<i>A. A. ZHOLDASBEKOV, M. I. SATAYEV</i>	
Advancing Tourism and Tourism Education Through Public and Private Partnerships: The Case of the New York Wine & Culinary Center	1652
<i>Francis M. DOMOY, Richard "Rick" M. LAGIEWSKI</i>	
Outsourcing Tendencies in Five Star Hotels: A Comparative Study of Management Perceptions of Antalya & Canary Island.....	1661
<i>Muhammet KESGIN, Rüya EHTİYAR</i>	
Some Determinants of Destination Satisfaction: Case of International Travelers In North Cyprus.....	1674
<i>Erdogan H. EKİZ, Ali BAVIK</i>	
Competitiveness Analyses and Development Perspectives of Georgian Tourism Industry.....	1691
<i>Zviad ELIZIANI</i>	
The Reflections Of The Demographic Profile Of The Eu Countries On The Touristic Demands From Turkey.....	1710
<i>Ayhan AYTAÇ, Derman KÜÇÜKALTAN</i>	

SPORTING EVENT TOURISM AND STRATEGIC CATERING MANAGEMENT

(The Example Of The 23rd Summer Universiade 2005, Izmir)

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ABSTRACT

Sporting events, provided by the tourism industry have been increasing over the years, with accompanying growth of competition in the market. The economic and social potential of sporting events for the tourism industry and destinations require more research attention. Catering services are one of the major challenges for the organizations like Universiade due to the high number of participants, delegates, staff and volunteers. During the 23rd Summer Universiade 2005, Izmir, catering services were provided on self-service basis between August 3-23, 2005 at the Athletes' Village Dining Hall located in the Residential Zone, with meals from five different cuisines including Turkish, European, Asian, vegetarian and Kosher (Jewish). It was a major event with its huge numbers. For example, total number of people joining the daily meals was 30,000 (except lunch boxes), total number of the meals during the games was 433,500, number of lunch boxes served during the games was 264,000. 6,000 calories per person-day was foreseen for the meals to be provided to the athletes. Food production, distribution and serving, timing, diet, hygiene and general sanitation were the most important factors for the event catering services. A detailed strategic planning was established for catering services of the games. The aim of this study is to investigate the strategic catering management systems of the 23rd Summer Universiade 2005, Izmir and attempt to introduce the key factors of event tourism catering systems. For research methodology, statistical data were obtained from the Universiade of Izmir and Bilintur the events' official catering company.

Keywords: *Sporting event tourism, catering services, strategic management, Universiade Izmir*

INTRODUCTION

Today sport and tourism are among the 'developed' world's most sought-after leisure experiences and are becoming very important economic activities. (Ritchie, 2005) Several contributors emphasised the need for strategic planning around major urban sporting events, particularly those attracting many tourists. Sporting events have been playing a key role in the image of the countries and cities. This type of sporting events present a series of complex planning, management, operational, logistical and technological challenges to the individuals, agencies and authorities responsible for their management. Athletes, officials, spectators and the media demand and expect excellence in facilities and organisation in every aspect of an event - from transport and timing, to catering. Catering service is one of the key factors of a successful sporting event. In this study, we tried to draw attention to the importance of the strategic catering management in such sporting events. Because of high risks and requirements, strategic catering management is very important task for the sporting events. Academic literature on the catering management related to event or sporting tourism is limited. The focus of academic research on food is mainly culinary or food and beverage tourism, whereas most of the studies done on the catering management is found in food magazines or reviews. Our aim here is to contribute an academic analysis in this direction by examining the 23rd Summer Universiade which was held in 2005 in Izmir.

Methodology

For research methodology, the statistical data were obtained from the Universiade of Izmir and the catering firm of Bilintur, which was the sporting event's official catering company. The paper therefore has been organised into three sections including: i) introducing the literature about sporting event tourism, (ii) the presentation of a research framework for strategic catering management of 23rd Summer Universiade 2005, Izmir and (iii) the conclusion and suggestions.

Sporting Tourism and 23 Universiade Summer Games 2005, Izmir

Until the 1990s, sports tended to be treated as a general or even accidental context for tourism research rather than as a central focus (Hinch and Higham, 2001). However, the need for better coordination among agencies at a policy level, more multidisciplinary research approaches, and more cooperation between tourism and sport-centered units in academic settings has gained importance as articulated by Gibson (1998). Universiade, as will be mentioned further, is one of the sporting events for students, bringing the words "university" and "olympiade" and hence, tourism and sports, together.

In literature sport tourism has a number of similar definitions. Shortly, sport tourism is a leisure-based travel (Gibson, 1998) that necessitate travel away

from home (Hall, 1992; Gibson, 1998 ; Standeven, DeKnop, 1999) to participate or to watch physical activities (Weed, Bull, 1997; Gibson, 1998) or to venerate attractions associated with physical activity (Gibson, 1998). There are, however, a number of other definitions for this concept. Kurtzman and Zauhar (1997) for example defined the term "sport tourism" has been coined to better understand the use of sport as a touristic endeavor. They further add that sport tourism activities can be categorized into five unique areas resorts, cruises, attraction, tours and events (Kurtzman, Zauhar, 2003). The scope of event sport tourism is extensive, and includes hallmark events, such as the Olympic Games (Gibson, 1999). Hall (1992) also describes sporting events as hallmark events. He adds that hallmark sport events readily encourage other attractions that seek to capitalize on the increased tourist volume created for the sport.

Sports tourism makes an important contribution to local and national economies and appears to have substantial potential to further build on this contribution (Deery, Jago, 2005). Hall (1996) asserts that bidding to host events is a widely applied competitive strategy by a city to position itself as a 'world class city'. Ross Bartow (formerly of Atlanta Committee for the Olympics, USA) explained the arrangements established in Atlanta to secure long-term gains from perhaps the biggest mega-event of all, the Olympic Games. Before the bid to host the Games, Atlanta had a local sports commission working to develop major sport activities, and soon after the city was awarded the Games this organisation developed a 10 year plan to build on the event (Bramwell, 1999). Also, China has recognized and accepted the economic and social value of international sporting events. Their government institutes and governments at provincial and municipal level are making the eleventh 'five-year plan' (2006--2010), which will increasingly focus on sports, especially international sport mega-events. It also reflects the desire of the Chinese government to implement policies to promote sustainable development scientifically (Ahlert, 2005).

Bramwell (1997) contends that effective strategic planning must be sensitive to the social and political context of the event. Sport tourism needs to be guided by a strategic plan that identifies the key goals in the area's development and incorporates a series of strategies intended to achieve these goals (Deery, Jago, 2005). Components of strategic planning include the development of definite time horizons, detailed allocation of resources to the various elements of the plan and the establishment of conduits for the communication of the plan (Deery, Jago, 2005).

Universiade is one of the sporting events. The word "Universiade" comes from "university" and "Olympiad," and means Olympic Games for students. The first World Student Games were held in Paris in 1923. Following the Paris Games,

competitions with participants from around the world were held in many places in Europe up to the 1939 Games in Monaco and Vienna, before after the war, the International Confederation of Students in the West, and the International Students Union in the East began separate games. It was not until 1957 that athletes from both the Western and Eastern blocks met to compete in joint games held in Paris. Two years later in 1959, the first "Universiade" was held in Turin under the auspices of the International University Sports Federation (FISU). Since then, the event has been known as "Universiade" (Universiade, Fukuoka, 1996).

"From then on, FISU was to organise the Games on a worldwide ever since this important period, the Universiades continue to attract more and more participants. FISU went from a total of 1,407 participants in Turin, Italy in 1959 to a total of 6,675 in Beijing, China in 2001 from more than 165 countries and 6,643 from 174 countries in Daegu, Korea in 2003. 7,805 participants were registered at the 2005 Summer Universiade of Izmir, Turkey. It was the highest number of all (FISU, 2006).

Catering Management

Since food has been proven to be an important means of selling the identity and culture of a destination, food consumption is regarded as one of the important factors in the destination marketing development (Quan, Wang, 2004). The other reason is that food consumption enables local food producers to add value to their products by creating a tourist experience around the raw materials (Hjalager, Richards, 2002). It is important to recognize that food consumption is not only by means of generating revenues for a destination, but also an important part of the tourist experience (Hjalager, Richards, 2002). Quan and Wang (2004), state that food consumption can be named as a supporting consumer experience and foods' role is either a means to meet the basic need of the body, or to get a sense of the ontological comfort of home when they travel. It is necessary to understand tourists' food culture such as their eating habits, and make sure the foods used in catering are in congruous with tourists' habits and customs (Quan and Wang, 2004). Especially at the sporting events, which is our main interest here, the food consumption is a very important factor due to the huge number of people involved in the event. Therefore, such kinds of events require strategic catering management. Wood (2000) refers to strategic management interactions between an organization and its environment and, more precisely, how such interactions are planned, maintained and utilized to the benefit of an organization (Wood, 2000). And function catering may be described as the service of food and beverages at a specific time and place, for a given number of people, to an agreed menu and price (Davis et al, 1998). The catering of the sporting event should be planned in a strategical manner because

of the factors like huge population of an event, sportsman nutrition, hygiene necessity, timing, food production, distribution and serving. Catering management, therefore, comprises the management of a number of components, each of which requires specific skills and strategies. Good hygiene and food safety practices and informed staff are vital in the preparation, storage, distribution and service of food. These matters are of particular importance in Universiade catering because there are many tourists and they may have less resistance to infection from contaminated food. A detailed strategic planning was established for catering services of the 23rd Summer Universiade 2005, Izmir.

Bilintur was the catering company of Universiade 2005, Izmir. Bilintur Catering was established in 1993 in Ankara under the body of Bilintur Inc. which is the partnership of BTA that has undertaken all food and beverage operations in Istanbul Atatürk Airport International Lines Terminal Bilintur catering also provide all food requirements of Bilkent University, primary school, high school and nursery schools in the campus, and A la Carte, table d'hôte and Fast Food restaurants in the university (Bilintur(a), 2006).

During the Universiade, catering services were provided on self-service basis between August 11-21, 2005 at the Athletes' Village Dining Hall located in the Residential Zone. The participants had the opportunity to get as much food as they desired (Official Report, 2006). Catering at these centralized facilities was available to all the games Universiade Summer Games 2005, Izmir participants, to the community 2005 volunteers and to all FISU family members.

Bilintur executives claim that the bidding process was too short and the specifications designated by the organisational committee brought some difficulties. Nevertheless they feel proud to accomplish such an important task of this magnitude, although it was not a profitable event for them from the business point of view.

First of all, the menus of the Universiade Games were prepared by the contribution of dietition, nutrition specialists and experienced advisors who worked for the Bilintur companies and the organization committee. While the Bilintur company was planning the menus of Universiade restaurants and lunch boxes, they took advantage of their previous years catering management of other events and the previous years Universiade menus' formats (Bilintur Result Report, 2006). As is mentioned by Li Shunli, the vice-director of 2008 Beijing Olympic Games Municipal Commerce Bureau, the catering operators should supply various food to meet the different tastes of the customers from different nations and regions (China Daily, 2004). Also, learning about the cultural differences in tourists' eating habits will effectively help improve the food service and enhance the

customer satisfaction (Quan, Wang, 2004). Taking this as a guiding principle, the menus for the Universiade, Izmir Games were prepared in a five-day cycle and participants were provided with meals from five different cuisines including Turkish, European, Asian, vegetarian and Kosher (Jewish). Bilintur was arranged to provide participants with 6.000 calories per person/day (Official Report, 2006). They served foods by open buffet in two air-conditioned tents brought from France with a capacity of 2150 persons for participants, and 800 persons for staff (Bilintur (b), 2006). Bilintur reports that had it not been for the very short bidding period, they would have preferred to construct prefabricated buildings instead of purchasing the tents from France, as this would have been the financially favourable option.

The food service industry is labor-intensive and a large number of people are required to attain food service objectives. Staffing organization in function catering is governed by a number of factors which include the size of the establishment and hence the number of staff permanently employed, and the numbers to be catered for at any one function which may involve additional staff being employed (Davis et al, 1998). In order to run this organization, Bilintur hired 558 people for their food and beverage company in the Aegean Region in addition to transferring to Izmir all their managerial staff in Ankara. The new 558 employees went through the following training programs: food safety trainings, general hygiene trainings, storing rules, hygiene in service, kitchen product processing rules, labor health and safety, cleaning and disinfection. Also, Bilintur utilized the volunteers at the Universiade for the distribution of the lunch boxes. After being carried to the gates of the Universiade facilities by the Bilintur personnel, who were not allowed to enter the facilities, the lunch boxes were distributed there by the volunteers. The volunteers also helped with the packing of the lunch boxes for two days as a result of a sudden increase in demand.

The foods of Universiade were produced in the three main kitchens. All kitchens were prepared by different projects. Kitchen utensils and equipments were newly obtained first hand from the Turkish firm MAKPA. The Universiade 2005 Izmir foods were produced in a huge tent, covering around 4000 square metres vast area (Bilintur Result Report, 006).

Meals were served after being prepared freshly. Service was presented on two main places. There were 10 bain-marie units in every serving place. Food in the bain-maries was not hold more than two hours. Apart from two service area, lunch boxes were provided to athletes and officials in the sports venues who could not benefit from the services in the Athletes' Dining Hall at the Village, due to their competition and training schedules at the 64 sport venues. In order to be able to benefit from the Lunch Box service, Heads of delegations were

required to fill out the lunch box request form one day prior to the competition or training, until 18⁰⁰ hrs and submit it to the Delegation Information center (Official Report, 2006).

Special packages were used for the delivery of lunch boxes. 20.000 numbers of daily provisions were prepared (maximum numbers daily reach) during the Universiade Games. For the delivery of the lunch boxes, 34 frigorific fleets were used. Bain-marie and salad bar were also used for the meals. (Bilintur Result Report, 2006)

The athletes tent was open from 05:00 early morning and 01.00 late midnight. In the Olympic Village, there was a restaurant which could serve for 2000 people at once. 3000 chairs, 750 table and 13.200.000 plates were used for serving. 2500 meals for staff and 9500 meals for athletes were prepared daily at each course (Bilintur(b), 2006).

The number of people, joining the daily meals were 30.000 (except lunch boxes). The number of the meals during the games were 433.500, lunch boxes were 264.000 (Bilintur Result Report, 2006).

Table 1. Time Schedule of Food for the 23rd Summer Universiade 2005, İzmir

Meals	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Main Meals	05:00 – 10:00	11:00 – 16:00	17:00 – 23:00
Snacks	10:00 – 11:00	16:00 – 17:00	23:00 – 01:00

Source: Official Report. (2006) 23rd Summer Universiade 2005 ,İzmir Volume 1: Management

The time schedule for service of Bilintur had been planned as in Table 1. However, the actual service had to be made for 24 hours continuously. All of the nine cooling stores were arranged by the order of the variety of foods, such as frozen, dried, shocked and dairy products. Daily controls were made by the associated department managers. The stages of receiving, production flow, final products and services were controlled and reported (Bilintur Result Report, 2006).

Supervision of water and food supplies in all venues, and general sanitation in the village dining halls, cafeterias and residences, was accomplished daily. Three public health specialists (Md, PhD) managed the food and general sanitation services. A supervision team of 21 expertse operated on a 24 hr., two-shift

basis (Official Report, 2006). These employees were trained before and had special certificate for their job (Nalçakan, 2006).

Strategic planning was established around four main objectives: prevention of food related diseases; assuring safe water usage; environmental health and waste management and prevention of work related health problems. Briefly, food production, distribution and serving at the village food production units and dining halls, and the Bornova lunchbox and personnel kitchen was supervised by two environmental health technicians each, who reported to the two food engineers acting as production supervisors, the two public health physicians and the three public health specialists, consecutively (Official Report, 2006).

Sampling was done for every item produced. Lunch boxes were sampled on a random basis from each distribution route and they preserved for analysis at +4° for 48 hours. The Izmir Health Directorate, The Public Health Laboratory and the contractor were main operation partners. According to the agreement with Bilintur, in case of any food related problems, Bilintur pay for a compensation (Nalçakan, 2006).

Table 2. Planned and Actualized Numbers During The Games

	Planned	Actualized
Meals for staff	306.000*	143.500
Meals for athletes	235.000*	290.000
Lunch Boxes	100.000 box*	264.000
Red meat	55 ton*	40
Poultry	23 ton*	60
Pulses	33 ton*	39
Staffed only for this organisation	450 person	558 person

*Source 1. FISU. Meals from five different cuisines during Izmir Games, June 22nd 2005 http://www.fisu.net/site/page_864.php

Source 2. (Bilintur Result Report, 2006)

Table 2, was formed by the numbers taken from Bilintur and FISU's statistical datas. In addition to the actualized numbers on the Table 2, 330,000 lt water, 165.000 glasses Coca Cola and 220.000 bread were consumed during the games (Ozcan, 2006). The catering planning process started by Bilintur June 2005, just almost 2 months before the Games because of the adjudication process of Universiade. And all the plans and preparations were done via the numbers on the contract. For this reason, lots of changes had to be made on the plans. For example; the number of lunchboxes specified in the contract was 100.000 and

Bilintur made its arrangements accordingly. However, the actual demand for lunch boxes was 264.000. For this reason, Bilintur had to adjust its production process during the first days of the Games and had to get help the volunteers for the packing of the lunch boxes for the first two days. According to Mr. Ozcan, the manager of the Olympiads village, the increase in the demand for lunchboxes and the decrease in the demand for regular meals can be associated with the fact that the meals were more expensive than the lunchboxes. The excessive meal which was not consumed during the first few days did also give rise to a waste problem. However, this was resolved quickly.

The fact that the meal times did not match with the schedule of the athletes did also give rise to a waste problem. Another problem was that the ingredients of the lunchboxes had to be changed after two days, as the original ingredients were disliked (Ozcan, 2006). Bilintur has stated that the deviation in the numbers has brought financial difficulties on their firm. Although they tried their utmost for the prestige of Turkey and Izmir. According to the Bilintur's Athletes Satisfaction Qestionnaire results 90% of athletes were pleased and satisfied from the Universiade food (Bilintur Result Report, 2006).

CONCLUSION

Today's major sporting events are very complex and highly demanding. Due to this fact the planning process of sporting event organization requires long term preparations. In this regard, it is important for such kind of international sporting events to start the bidding process at least two years in advance. For example, in Daegu, all units finished and tested their preparations two years before the 22nd Summer Universiade, 2003. However, the bidding process for the catering management of 23rd Summer Universiade, 2005, Izmir was finished only two months before the starting date of the Games. The reason for that was the late adjudication process of Universiade budget allocation by the Government. The catering deal was based on the numbers and prices specified by the Universiade committee in their master plan. Bilintur planned their preparations according to these specified numbers. However, a significant deviation was observed between the planned and actualized. For example; the actual demand for lunchboxes were doubled. In order to adjust this problem, Bilintur managers had to get help from the volunteers for the packing of the lunchboxes for the first two days. Furthermore, the increase in the demand for lunchboxes and the decrease in the demand for regular meals can be associated with the fact that the meals were more expensive than the lunchboxes. The excessive meal which was not consumed during the first few days caused a waste problem. Another reason for the waste was disliked ingredients of the lunch boxes. However, these were solved quickly by changing the menus of lunch boxes and the coordination with the Olympic Village Committee.

The short preparation period caused extra financial problems to the catering firm, Bilintur. For example, they would have preferred to construct prefabricated buildings instead of leasing the tents from France, as this would have been the financially favourable option.

It is important for contractor companies to share their gains with the community with regard to their social responsibility consideration which will also add positive image and prestige to their current state. Bilintur, starting from this point of view, has been loyal to Universiade agreement by overcoming problems with flexible and creative solutions. Success of the 23rd Summer Universiade 2005, Izmir and Turkey's prestige has preceded the financial expectations and with this motivation the task was accomplished. To provide catering service for a huge amount of people over ten days for 24 hours is a rather challenging job. Bilintur, the catering provider of Universiade has done a good job without any major failure.

It is hoped that this study would not only introduce the key factors of event tourism catering systems but it would also provide a source for the organization of similar events.

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