

The Use of E-communication in Promoting Selected Religious, Cultural and Historical Monuments in Presov in the East of Slovakia

Martina Ferencová¹(✉), Beata Ślusarczyk², Sebastian Kot²,
and Veronika Mišenčíková³

¹ Faculty of Public Administration, Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Kosice,
Popradská 66, 040 00 Košice, Slovakia
mferencov@gmail.com

² Faculty of Management, Czestochowa University of Technology,
Armii Krajowej 19B, 42-200 Częstochowa, Poland
{jagoda, sebacat}@zim.pcz.czest.pl

³ Roman Catholic Archbishopric Košice, Košice, Slovakia
veronika.misencikova@gmail.com

Abstract. Prešov, located in the east of Slovakia, is famous for religious, cultural and historical monuments, most of which are used by denominations for religious purposes and are of great importance to communities' religious life. Their promotion to target audiences in both domestic and global tourism market via modern promotional tools is of topical significance. This paper aims at examining the use of e-communication tools in promoting selected monuments with emphasis on social networks when addressing target audiences that include tourists (believers and unbelievers) from Slovakia and abroad.

Keywords: Communication · Social networks · Religious · Cultural and historical monuments

1 Introduction

Monuments present values of precious authentic and historical legacy. They are part of cultural and national identity and direct legacy left by ancestors and predecessors. Monument preservation primarily aims at preserving and promoting values reflected by those monuments. This is possible, however, only if those monuments are fully recognized and their value as well as responsibility for preserving this value and passing it to next generations are understood [1].

Informing the public and particular target groups is thus a priority when protecting monuments and raising awareness of their importance for the society and its development. In this sense, it is important to use marketing tools, especially tools of marketing communication when addressing the public and specific target audiences. This also applies to promoting religious, cultural, and historical monuments [2].

In this article we examine three religious, cultural and historical monuments and the use of e-communication tools for their promotion. These monuments are significant

places of cultural and religious life of three religious congregations in Prešov in the east of Slovakia (representatives of the Roman Catholic Church, the Evangelical Church of Augsburg Confession and the Jewish community) and for tourists (domestic and foreign) they are a source of attractiveness and valuable information on religious, cultural and historical events in the Prešov region and in Prešov.

2 Marketing in Tourism – Theoretical Basic

Marketing is understood as a social and managing process in which individuals and groups gain what they need and want [3, 4] through production and exchange of products and values and/or the process of planning and implementing the concept, pricing, promoting and distributing ideas, goods and services aimed at the exchange that will satisfy the needs of individuals and organizations (American Marketing Association; AMA). It is also related to tourism where the exchange of services between providers and their customers, clients is primarily possible. Also when creating opportunities for leisure activities [5] and also in case of managing these marketing activities in relation to the target audiences [6].

In general, marketing includes 4 basic elements – the marketing mix tools: product (product/service), price, place (distribution) and promotion (advertising). Service marketing that includes also tourism contains three other elements: people, physical environment and process (process of providing services). Tourism falls into a specific category in the service sector thus the following elements typical for it may be mentioned: people, packaging – creating service packages (offers), partnership, programming – creating programs [7]. Marketing is based on the relationship to customers. In tourism marketing the customer is, more than anywhere else, “the alpha and omega of the business process” [8]. Thus it is necessary to provide him or her with quality, updated and attractive information concerning the offer.

Target audience is currently being informed about products and services of tourism mainly through e-marketing [9]. It helps tourism entities to undertake their business activities quickly, smoothly and accurately and well in advance.

This happens by means of several tools and means of e-marketing, e-communication such as on-line PR, viral marketing, microsites, buzz marketing, advergaming, marketing for the support of communities, advertisement in search engines (SEO, SEM, PPC), e-mail marketing, affiliate marketing, on-line customer competitions, social networks, profile websites (website sponsorship), banner advertisements, PageRank and others [10]. These tools of e-communication are the focus of our investigation in relation to religious tourism and religious, cultural and historical monuments.

3 Research Methodology

This paper aimed at analyzing a current state of the use of e-communication tools of selected religious, cultural and historical monuments situated in the Prešov region in Prešov.

The monuments were identified by selection using keywords, the Prešov region, Prešov and religious monuments in the Internet search engine. Subsequently, websites

presenting monuments (preferably websites of monuments themselves, as well as websites of parishes, towns and others, for example tourist portals, projects, etc.) were searched for. Three monuments (Calvary – St. Cross Church, Evangelical College and the Synagogue, all in Presov) and their websites promoting were selected and analyzed for the purpose of this paper.

The analysis of the use of e-communication tools was carried out according to a designed model of e-communication (model elements set analysis criteria). Tools of descriptive statistics (bar and spider graphs) were used to process the collected data. E-communication model (of promotional tools on the Internet) comprised four elements:

- Applied e-communication tools: YouTube (the number of videos, updatedness), Facebook (updatedness, photographs, invitations, the number of fans, information, the number of shares), website, blog, Google+, PageRank, PPC, E-mailing, banners, external banners (160 points);
- Information (on a selected monument): history, photographs, opening hours and entrance fees, contact details (40 points);
- Services (services provided at the location of the monument and its vicinity): accommodation, catering services, hiking within 30 km, monuments within 30 km (40 points);
- Graphics (website providing information about the monument): a visual impact, content of the website, its layout, user-friendliness of the website (40 points).

Scores for particular criteria ranged from 0 to 10 points (10 being the highest awarded score and 0 the lowest). The maximum number of points that the promotion of the monument on the internet could gain was 208 points (Table 1).

Table 1. Categories according to scores

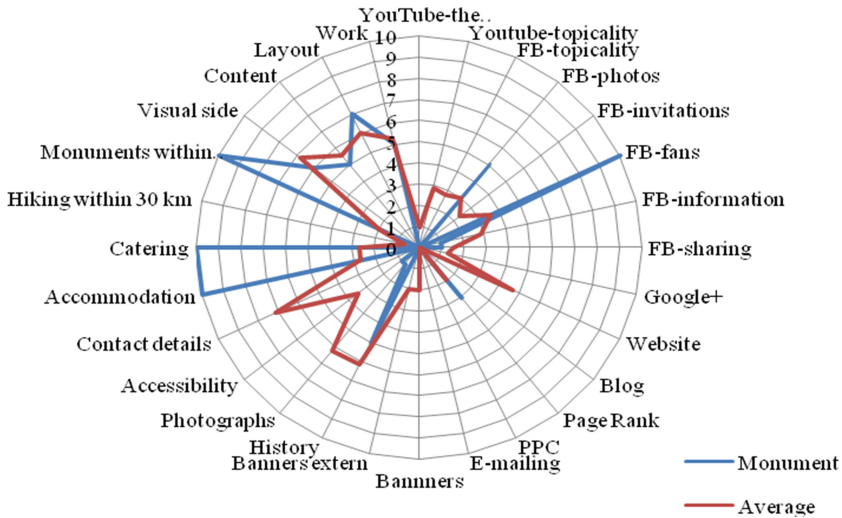
Category	Value	Description
1.	280–211	Above average use of promotional tools on the Internet
2.	210–140	Average use of promotional tools on the Internet
3.	140–70	Below average use of promotional tools on the Internet
4.	69–0	Insufficient use of promotional tools on the Internet

4 Results and Discussion

Selected monuments and their evaluation expressed by scores and percentages are shown in bar graphs, scoring for particular categories is presented in spider graphs.

Calvary – St Cross Church in Prešov [11]. It originated at the beginning of the 18th century and it consists of a complex of fourteen baroque chapels with the church at the top of the Calvary, Holy stairs chapel, catacombs and an adjacent cemetery. The complex was financed by a Lithuanian Prince Radziwill, who came to Prešov together with his court and personal guard in the autumn of 1764. He had the chapel built to express his gratitude to the town for granting him asylum after his forced fled from Poland.

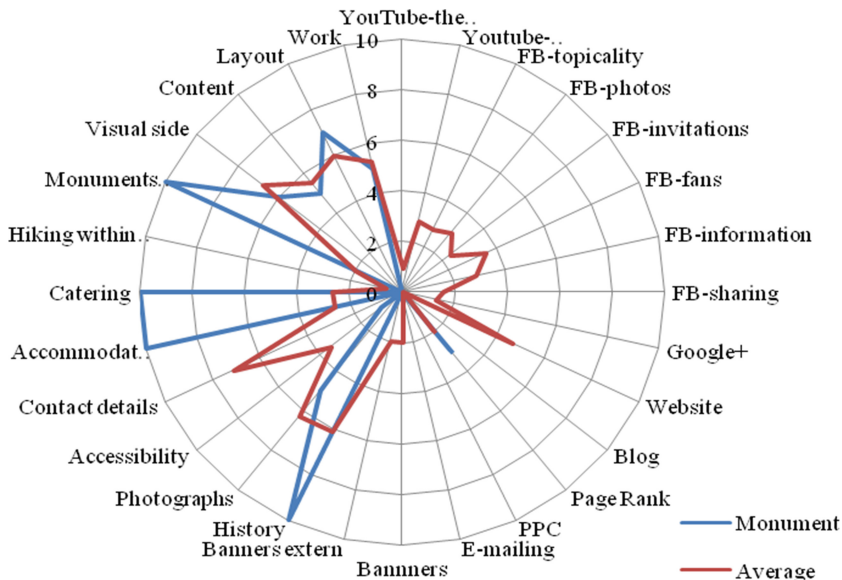
From researches we found that the selected religious, cultural and historical monument – Prešov Calvary and/or its website scored 20 out of 160 points, that is 12.50 % for the use of Internet-based promotional tools. Criteria concerning providing information gained 0 out of 40 points. Graphics of the website gained 23 points out of 40 that is 57.50 %. Calvary – St Cross Church in Prešov exceeded the average only in the area of giving information on services (Graph 1).



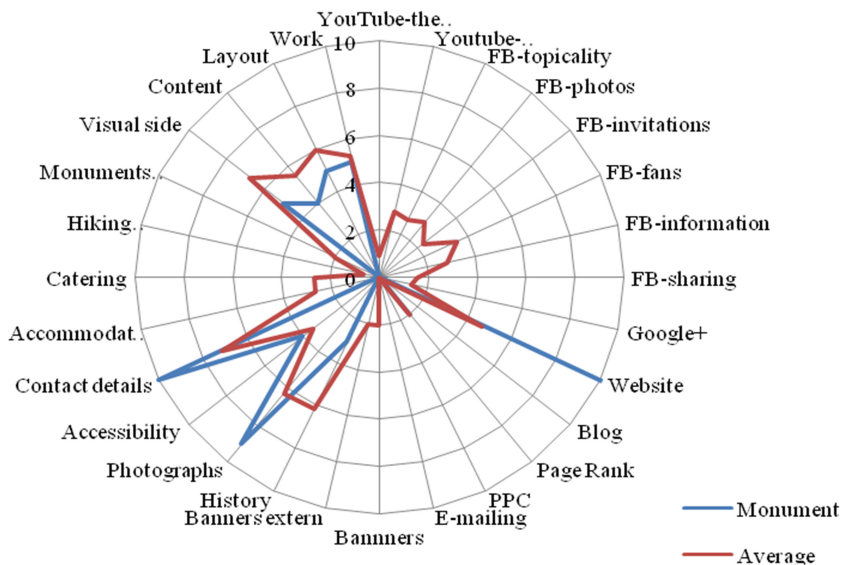
Graph 1. Criteria scoring– Calvary in Prešov

Evangelical College in Prešov [12]. The college was established in 1665 as a certain counterbalance to the Jesuit University in Trnava. The college building had been owned by various owners and four times it had been considered to gain the status of university, however social historical events prevented that. A lot of known people worked and studied at the college and their commemorating plaques can be found in the building even to this day. The research results showed that the use of Internet-based promotional tools by the website promoting this religious cultural heritage monument scored 3 out of 160 points that is 1.88 %. Criteria concerning providing information gained 16 out of 40 points, representing 40 %. Information about services in the nearby area scored 30 out of 40 points that is 75 %. Website graphics obtained 23 out of 40 points, 57.50 % (Graph 2).

The Synagogue in Prešov (A Museum) [13]. The orthodox synagogue in the Moorish style was built in the years 1897–1898 by the Kollacsek and Wirth construction company. The opening ceremony was held at Yom Kippur feast in 1898. The interior is decorated by rich frescoes in oriental fashion and the collection contains historical articles from the Jewish Museum, the first of its kind, which originated in 1928. Results pointed that the use of promotional opportunities on the Internet and Internet tools by the website promoting the monument was assigned 12 out of 160 points, making



Graph 2. Criteria scoring –Evangelical College in Prešov



Graph 3. Criteria scoring – The Synagogue in Prešov

7.50 %. Criteria relating to providing information gained 26 out of 40 points that is 65 %. Giving information on services in the nearby area gained 0 out of 40 points. Website graphics scored 19 out or 40 points that makes 47.50 %. The Synagogue in Prešov exceeded the average only in providing information about the monument itself.

As presented in Graph 3, the monument excels in its own website, photographs and contact details. All other criteria reached below average score.

5 Conclusion

This article has analyzed the use of e-communication tools in promoting selected religious, cultural and historical monuments in Prešov. The findings of the analysis according to the scores assigned to particular criteria of the e-communication model used in this paper were unsatisfactory. They have shown the insufficient use of e-communication tools and below average use of on-line social media and special social networks considered to the latest and the most effective tools for addressing target audiences worldwide.

Business entities including tourism service providers are trying to achieve a synergic effect of using marketing tools over the Internet in their marketing strategy [14]. When promoting religious, cultural heritage monuments in Europe there are marketing objectives – informing, attracting an interest, arousing a desire for a visit and making potential and real visitors (believers and unbelievers) pay a visit. There are also cultural and religious aims – preserving cultural heritage, raising awareness about its significance (material and spiritual) and developing human and religious values during the crisis of values and humanity.

Although Slovakia is considered to be a strongly religious state, the awareness of the wealth of its religious, cultural and historical monuments by the young generation as well as other target audiences (believers and unbelievers) at home and abroad is at a low level. Active use of e-communication tools and their combination when promoting those monuments emphasizing social media may help to fulfill the given aims (marketing, cultural and religious) now and in the future as well as to increase awareness of those monuments in the east of Slovakia.

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