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THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA'S USING MARKETING DECISIONS IN TRAVEL AGENCIES

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EXTENSIVE SUMMARY

In times of increasing competition, businesses are allocating more resources and time to marketing activities. With the development of web 2.0 technology, businesses that continue their marketing activities with classical marketing methods have started to use many electronic marketing platforms effectively. One of them is social media sharing platform is one of the most used internet applications today. According to the survey conducted by the statistical institution of Turkey(TUIK); 61.2% of the individuals in Turkey are internet users, 8 people from every 10 households have internet access and social media is the first place among internet usage purposes. Such an important communication channel creates great opportunities for businesses.

The aim of this study is to determine the level of social media usage of travel enterprises operating in Sakarya and to determine the effectiveness of social media in marketing decisions. Firstly, the use of social media by the individuals in the country has been revealed, and then the importance has been given to tourism operators and users. It is also the purpose of the study to develop suggestions on how travel agencies can be more effective in sales and marketing, by identifying the shortcomings of use in social media and adding social media to marketing strategies.

In the research, the data is obtained from the qualitative research methods by using semi-structured interview technique. The data were obtained by interviewing with the weighted managers and personnel of the travel agencies and statistical analyzes were performed to try to bring suggestions to the results obtained in the framework of the sector, businesses and researchers. In the scientific label frame, the real names of the agencies are concealed, and instead of the real names, codes such as A1, A2, A3 are used. As a result of the interviews with the agency authorities, the obtained data were tried to interpret in three categories as a result of descriptive analysis.

As a result, it will be beneficial for businesses to use this platform, which has such a high potential for interaction, to effectively and regularly use, as travel agencies increasingly benefit from social media opportunities in acquiring new customers and increasing total sales. It has been determined that Facebook is the most used social platform by travel agencies participating in the survey. It is an important finding that travel agencies do not include in their marketing decisions using their customer opinions, complaints and assessments, which can easily be obtained from social media. Businesses should use their social media accounts more actively and up-to-date, employ at least one social media and marketing training or experience, if possible, to maximize the efficiency of this marketing channel and keep the business in the era of digital marketing.