A RESEARCH IN ANKARA ON CRISIS MANAGEMENT PRACTICES OF TRAVEL AGENCY MANAGERS

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EXTENSIVE SUMMARY

Crisis management is the process covering the tasks such as information collection, preparation and prevention, bringing under control, learning and evaluation, which are performed in order to overcome the phenomenon that occurs unexpectedly, adversely affects the image of institutions, businesses, regions or products or causes economic and social losses (T.C. Ministry of Tourism, 2002, p.3). Not all crisis in the tourism sector develops unexpectedly, sharply and inevitably. The important thing in crisis management is to be able to recognize the symptoms in advance and take the necessary measures (Demir, 2014, p.236). It is seen that the enterprises, which are capable of crisis management even in the cases where it creates threats crisis, can get advantages in the market (Sarı, 2010, p.6). Therefore, the fact that travel agencies are prepared in advance for a potential crisis will help them gain advantages over other sector enterprises. Therefore, as an enterprise that is prepared for any crisis it is necessary to put into practice the strategies readily established when the crisis comes (Köroğlu, 2004, p.86).

Method

It is aimed to reveal the management strategies and thoughts of the managers of the travel agencies operating in Ankara about the crisis management during the pre-crisis or in a time of crisis. The main objectives of this research are to determine the degree of the prevalence of the concepts of crisis and crisis management in travel agencies, whether the travel agencies determine strategies to prevent crises in the pre-crisis period and what strategies they implement during the crisis. The research population consists of 800 A group travel agency managers operating in Ankara. During data collection the questionnaire have been applied to travel agencies operating in Ankara. As a result, a total of 135 questionnaires which can be used for this research have been obtained.

Conclusion and Suggestions

Considering the survey results, it appears that most of the Group A travel agents operating in Ankara does not give due importance to crisis management practices. Economic factors are the most important cause of the crisis for travel agents. Agencies are required to follow an economic policy in line with the changes occurring in their own countries and across the world. When travel agencies go through a crisis period, they should pursue strategies to reduce the impact of the crisis. Although this policy seems to be aimed at business protection, it may cause an increase in adverse effects on the company’s crisis. Therefore, companies should take measures to address the current crisis altogether by taking quick decisions on the reduction of the impact of the crisis as well as including business employees in the decision rather than adopting policies for defence.
The crisis is also a learning and renewal process. It can be stated that creation of new management techniques is the most positive result of the crisis. The most negative consequence of the crisis is the obligation to make quick decisions. This result puts pressure on senior management in particular. Executives should also be able to act as leaders in times of crises. It is crucial that senior management predict a future crisis, identify possible crisis scenarios, transmit these scenarios to employees and finally carry our activities on the preparation of a crisis management plan.

Crisis management is a fairly complicated process. Therefore, what companies think of crisis management is the fact that crises force travel agents to be informed about crisis management. Crisis management is of vital importance to the tourism sector. Performing an efficient crisis management is the requirement for a knowledge-based management. Throughout the crisis management process, all employees, especially senior management should make certain sacrifices.

The majority of the travel agents within the scope of this study does not have a crisis management plan. The awareness that the companies with a crisis management system gain advantages over their competitors should be spread among companies. The most important reason that encourages companies to prepare a crisis management plan is the demand to cope with the uncertainty created by the crisis. It is obvious that a company having previously taken measures against crises has an advantage over other companies operating in the sector. Thus, it is essential that the crisis management plan be revised at regular intervals and updated in line with the changing circumstances. An effective crisis management will allow companies to survive the dangers of crisis periods with minimum damage.