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EXAMINATION OF HOTELS' SPA WEBSITE DESIGNS

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays, there is a particular awareness and demand raise on healthty lifestyle. Spas are one of the most convenient tools to meet this demand. Most of the hotels add spas to their facilities to take part in meeting this demand. In tourism sector, as in any other sector, Internet is an indispensable advertising and marketing tool. Hotels, which are keystones of tourism sector, are making use from the benefits of Internet in order to operate their marketing strategies effectively. They also use Internet marketing for their spa facilities. This study aims to examine the Internet usage situation of hotel's about their spa facilities and to give useful suggestions to promote spa introduction strategies. From this point of view, 4 and 5 star hotel spa web sites in Antalya, where is the tourism capital of Turkey with the most numerous hotels, were examined through the content analysis. The gathered data is evaluated with frequency and percentage ranges and analysis conducted through this web sites. The results indicated that both 5 and 4 star hotels in Antalya should and may use Internet marketing more effectively.

***Keywords**: Hotel, Spa, Content Analysis, Web Site Design, Antalya*

1.INTRODUCTION

People used to get information about touristic destinations and spa facilities through phone calls, printed and written advertisements. But thanks to everyday evolving technology, Internet, nowadays, is the best introduction tool for both consumers, who seek reliable and detailed information about destinations and hotel executives who seek to develop more efficient marketing strategies for their spa facilities.

Spas with the raising awareness about having a healthy lifestyle, are gaining more and more importance amongst societies. As people adopt healthier lifestyles they also do not want to take break from their way of life when they are on vacation. So they prefer hotels with adequate spa facilities

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where they can keep on their healthy diet, keep exercising and have fun at the same time. Hotels which realize this opportunity, are adopting spa facilities to benefit from this demand. Also spas are continuously seeking ways to embodying their services. For this purpose, using Internet and adopting online marketing strategies through websites look like the best solution for spas. Thus, they adopt e-mail list marketing strategy and give advertisement to search engines, they adopt social media accounts to communicate with their customers instantly. These are not solely enough. Also having a spa logo, spa slogan and putting it on website have great importance in order to create an effective company image (Salon Builder, 2014).

Also as the Internet usage through the world is getting more and more common and today in Turkey 48,9% of the population use Internet (TUIK, 2014). Parets (2002) points out that not only big hotel chains use well designed websites but also small hotels which seek inexpensive and effective marketing tools, use internet marketing in order to increase their competitiveness in the market. From this point of view it can easily be said that most of the touristic product consumers seek online information and purchase possibilities. Therefore this study aims to examine the hotel spa websites to evaluate their website effectiveness in terms of site design characteristics and online marketing practices.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Online marketing is a tool which extends the conventional marketing with new methods into a brand new dimension. So, it promises more benefits to the both consumers and sellers (Kırcova, 2005: 34-35). Beacuse of this features, online marketing is rapidly growing and becoming an essential tool for touristic businesses as well as the other sectors. With this growth almost every firm adopts online marketing strategies and implement these strategies through their websites. However, adopting website does not guarantee success. Success at online marketing depends on two stages. The first stage is traffic which means attracting visitors to the website. And the second is conversion which include turning visitors into clients. A website is a guide which takes the visitors on a road trip. If a website can provide the right destination to visitors, it will eventually turn them into clients. To create a successful website essential tools are considered as choosing right keywords, optimizing home page, building links, Local search listings, online reviews, online advertising and the most importantly these days using the social media (Spaboom, 2014).

There are studies which examine hotel websites in terms of general context and Internet marketing strategies (Connoly, Olsen, &Moore, 1998; Liebmann, 2000; Rushmore, 2000; Mullen, 2000; Benckendorff & Black, 2000; Sigala, 2001; Karpinski, 2001 Kasavana, 2002;). However there is not a specific study focused on spa websites of hotels.

Law and Hsu (2006) chose two groups which include online browsers who only seek information and online purchasers who made online bookings and examined perceived importance level of specific dimensions and attributes on hotel websites. The results indicated that there was no significant difference on most of the included dimensions and attributes between these groups. Baloglu and Pekcan (2006) studied web site design and Internet site marketing practices of upscale and luxury hotels in Turkey. The results indicated that the hotels in Turkey are not using Internet to it's full potential and they are not using effective e-marketing.

De Wulf, Schillewaert, Muylle and Rangarajan (2006) have conducted a study on the role of pleasure in website success. Authors developed a process model of website success by identifying the role of pleasure as a key mediating variable. According to the results pleasure partially mediated the evaluations–success relationship and also found significant support for direct relationships between web site evaluations and success. Wan (2002) examined the websites of international tourist hotels and tour wholesalers in Taiwan in terms of user interface, variety of information and online reservation. Results indicated that user interfaces rated the most and the use of Internet in Taiwan's tourism/hospitality industry is not for marketing but primarily for advertising.

Bai, Law and Wen (2008) have studied the impact of website quality on customer satisfaction and purchase intentions on Chinese online visitors. Results indicated that online satisfaction has a positive impact on purchase intensions in both long and short term. Also visual environment is significant to increase intentions for purchase of travel products online. Schmidt, Cantallops and dos Santos (2008) have studied the characteristics of hotel websites and their implications for website effectiveness. Results indicated that there is a circular effect between website characteristics and consumer demands. Websites which serve inefficiently to consumer demands are directing consumers to use traditional tourist distributors.

In this study, hotels' web sites were examined in context of promotion and marketing tools of hotels' SPA facilities.

3. METHODOLOGY AND FINDINGS OF STUDY

3.1 METHODOLOGY

Content analysis is the criteria, information or essence that researcher look for how frequently it is mentioned when examining a written source (Aziz, 1990: 107). Content analysis is a technique which helps to determine the significant features of a written source in a systematical, objective and quantatively way (Arseven, 2001:87; Franzosi, 2004: 549). Content analysis is applied in order to attain scientific results. Though it has emerged as a quantitive method, it has been developed in time and has become a method which can be applied to both qualitative and quantitive approaches. Not only the number of words should be taken in consideration but also their meanings which they gain

through the relations in text they are in (Temizkan, 2010). From this point of view this study utilizes content analysis to analyze the 4 and 5 star hotel websites in Antalya region in terms of site design characteristics, effectiveness and spa marketing practices on the Internet.

A list of all registered hotels in Antalya are requested from Ministry of Culture and Tourism. 4 and 5 star hotels in Antalya are picked for study. There were 222 4-star hotels and 290 5-star hotels, totally 512 hotels. All of the hotels are examined if they have web sites for hotel and their spa facilities and according to results there are a total of 333 hotels which have website. 207 of 5 star hotels have web sites for hotels which include information about spa facilities but only 2 of them have a seperate web site for their spa facilities. 186 of 4 star hotels have websites but only 126 of them have spa facility information and none of them has a seperate spa web site.

Coding form is adapted from Baloglu and Pekcan's (2002) study. The original form was about general hotel features. These questions are customized for spa features. Irrelevant questions to spa are taken out. Coding form consists of 3 divisions with 41 items. First division includes hotel's information, second division includes design features with 3 sub-divisons which are interactivity, navigation and functionality. The last division includes marketing features. The websites of hotels which take part in study are evaluated according to this criterias. During the evaluation process, every website has been evaluated with a seperate coding form form which has "yes" and "no" options for criterias.

3.2. FINDINGS

As mentioned earlier, a total of 333 hotel's website are examined through content analysis in order to determine on which level they use Internet for marketing purposes and to promote their spa facilities, spa services and spa products.

As it can be seen on the Table-1, 10,1% of 5 star hotels' spas have a unique spa name other than hotel's name. 4,8% for 4 star hotels. Only 18,4% of 5 star hotels are giving information about which department operates the spa facilities or with which department the spa facilities are related and 2 of 126 4 star hotels are giving information about operating department and the rate is 1,6%. 2 of 207 5 star hotels and 1 of 126 4 star hotels from a total 333 hotels have an independent spa web site. Not having spa name different than hotel's might seem as a good way to avoid confusion but a spa should have a slogan to attract consumers.

Table-1. Business informations on hotel's spa websites.								
	207 5 Star Hotels				126 4 Star Hotels			
Business Information	**n**		**%**		**n**		**%**	
	Yes	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
A unique name for SPA facility	21	186	10,1	89,9	6	120	4,8	95,2
Operating department information	38	169	18,4	81,6	2	124	1,6	98,4
Independent spa web site	2	205	99	1	1	125	0,8	99,2

During the examination of site design characteristics through interactivity, functionality and navigation, as it can be seen from the Table-2, although 5 star hotels give more information than 4 star hotels very few of hotel's spa websites have phone number, e-mail adress, social media accounts, online evaluation form and online guest book. This is maybe because spa facilities are operating within hotel and guests making contact with spa during their stay and evaluating them with a general hotel evaluation form.

Table-2. Interactivity of hotel spa websites								
	207 5 Star Hotels				126 4 Star Hotels			
	n		**%**		**n**		**%**	
Interactivity	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
SPA's phone number	10	197	4,8	95,2	1	125	0,8	99,2
SPA's adress	10	197	4,8	95,2	0	126	0	100
Online information form for SPA services and products	5	202	2,4	97,6	0	126	0	100
SPA's e-mail adress	10	197	4,8	95,2	0	126	0	100
SPA's social media accounts	7	200	3,4	96,6	5	121	4	96
Current exchange rates	0	207	0	100	1	125	0,8	99,2
Online evaluation form for SPA	0	207	0	100	0	126	0	100
Online guest book for SPA	2	205	1	99	0	126	0	100

Table 3 shows that in 70% of 5 star hotels and 97,6% of 4 star hotels spa pages there are an index page link but only 3,9% of 5 stars hotels and none of 4 star hotels spa pages have search capabilities. The reason 4 star hotels do not have search capabilities might be that they have search capability on their main page.

Table-3. Navigation of Hotel Spa Websites.								
	207 5 Star Hotels				126 4 Star Hotels			
	n		**%**		**n**		**%**	
Navigation	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
Index page link	145	62	70	30	123	3	97,6	2,4
Search capabilities	8	199	3,9	96,1	0	126	0	100

Table-4 shows the functionality features of spa website designs, in which 83,1 of 5 star hotels and 88,1 of 4 star hotels do not have a SPA slogan at their pages. While almost half of 5 star hotels have a background color or picture, nearly 80% of 4 star hotels do not have background color or picture. Videos and music is another feature that web sites are lacking of. Also only 1 of 5 star hotels

has a “what’s new” page while none of 4 star hotels have. Both 4 and 5 star hotels web sites have very little downloadable content about SPA services and products. 6,3% of 5 star hotels have downloadable content about spa services and products while 18,3% of 4 star hotels have downloadable content about spa services and products. Also the use of flash animations are not very common either for both hotel types. Visual attractions and small entertainment features might be helpful with creating fun image and it would be effective on consumer’s deciding process.

More than 90% of both 5 and 4 star hotels’ spa pages have multilingual capabilities, 87% of 5 stars and 67,5% of 4 star hotels have easy access to SPA services and products information. 76,3% of 5 star hotels have detailed information about SPA services and products while this number is only 15,9% for 4 star hotels.

Table-4. Functionality of hotel’s spa web sites.

	207 5 Star Hotels				**126 4 Star Hotels**			
	n		**%**		**n**		**%**	
Functionality	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
SPA Slogan	35	172	16,9	83,1	15	111	11,9	88,1
SPA website background color	99	108	47,8	52,2	23	103	18,3	81,7
SPA website background picture	88	119	42,5	57,5	16	110	12,7	87,3
Video	9	198	4,3	95,7	4	122	3,2	96,8
Music	16	191	7,7	92,3	14	112	11,1	88,9
SPA website's last update date	1	206	0,5	99,5	9	117	7,1	92,9
Do you have to scroll down on SPA page	95	112	45,9	54,1	29	97	23	77
Ads and banners on SPA website	22	185	10,6	80,4	15	111	11,9	88,1
Downloadable content about SPA services and products	13	194	6,3	93,7	23	103	18,3	81,7
What's new page	4	203	1,9	98,1	0	126	0	100
Multilingual capabilities	187	20	90,3	8,7	114	12	90,5	9,5
Flash animation about SPA services and products	17	190	8,2	91,8	25	101	19,8	80,2
Easy access to SPA services and products information	180	27	87	13	85	41	67,5	32,5
Detailed information about Spa services and products	158	49	76,3	23,7	20	106	15,9	84,1

As it can be seen from the Table-5, a very high percentage of 5 star hotels spa website pages have high quality spa facilitiy photos and 87,4 of them have easily readable font. When it comes to 4 star hotels 57,1% of them have facility photos and 54% of them have high quality photos. 84,9% of 4 star hotels web sites use easiliy readable font. Though both hotel types have good multilingual capabilities, using facility photos on spa websites might have a good effect on embodying of services.

Only 7 of 207 5 star hotels and 1 of 126 4 star hotels give special offer information and only 6 of 5 star hotels and none of 4 star hotels have membership discounts and opportunities information on their web sites. However 66% of 5 star hotels give product and service descriptions while this number is 28,6% for 4 star hotels. Very few of 5 star (1,9%) and 4 star hotels (0,8%) give price information on

their websites. Adopting a membership program may steer consumers to revisit. Further more supporting membership program with discounts and advantages may attract local people to use spa facilities.

Almost 70% of 5 star hotels and 76% of 4 star hotels have a map to the hotel and spa if their spa facilitiy is on a seperate location. 18,4% of 5 star hotels have online payment capability, 16,4% of them use online reservation system and 2,4% accepts reservations by e-mail. 4 star hotels do not use online payment system except one of them. They also do not use an online payment system and they do not accept reservations by e-mail. This is also may occur because spa employees usually contact with consumers during stay but having online payment capabilities may help to create early buying advantages in order to support membership program and raise sales.

Table-5. Marketing features of hotels' spa web sites.

	207 5 Star Hotels				126 4 Star Hotels			
	n		%		n		%	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
SPA facility photos	188	19	90,8	9,2	72	54	57,1	42,9
SPA equipment photos	103	104	49,8	50,2	38	88	30,2	69,8
Good photo quality	164	43	79,2	20,8	68	58	54	46
Readable font	181	26	87,4	12,6	107	19	84,9	15,1
Special offer information about SPA services	7	200	3,4	96,6	1	125	0,8	99,2
Description of SPA services and products	137	70	66,2	33,8	36	90	28,6	71,4
Membership discounts and opportunities	6	201	2,9	97,1	0	126	0	100
Map to the SPA facility	143	64	69,1	30,9	96	30	76,2	23,8
Online payment capability	38	169	18,4	81,6	1	125	99,2	0,8
Online reservation capability for SPA	34	173	16,4	83,6	0	126	0	100
E-mail reservation capability for SPA	5	202	2,4	97,6	0	126	0	100
Touristic information link	21	186	10,1	89,1	107	19	84,9	15,1
Price information for SPA services and products	4	203	1,9	98,1	1	125	0,8	99,2

4.CONCLUSION

Internet usage through the world is rapidly growing. Consumers mostly seeking online information before buying a product or a service. In this context, the power and importance of online marketing can not be ignored. According to the results, most of the hotel spas do not have a unique name or slogan or a seperate spa website which is dedicated to promote spa facilities and services. Also very few of them have social media accounts. Most of the websites are not attractive as they lack of background colour and photos. Both 5 and 4 star hotels do not give price information on their websites and have very little downloadable content. Also both 5 and 4 star hotels mostly do not have

online payment capabilities, online reservation capabilities. Other missing details are information about membership discounts and opportunities.

What is positive about both 5 and 4 star hotels websites is that they have multilingual capabilities, so foreign tourists can easily reach to the information they seek. However, while 5 star hotels mostly have detailed information about their services and products, most of the 4 star hotels do not.

In this context, it is fair to say that both 5 and 4 star hotels are using Internet marketing as a marketing tool. However, they should and may use it more effectively. It can be recommended to have a unique spa name and slogan. Additionally, they should have up to date information for services, products and promotions on their websites. Using attractive and interesting tools on websites and creating a membership circle are also useful in order to steer guests to revisit. Finally, executives should consider adopting more effective online marketing strategies and evolve their websites in this context. The limitation of this study was that most of the hotels do not have up to date websites and spa pages were missing detailed information.

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