

FESTIVAL TOURISM IN THE REPOSITIONING OF CROATIAN TOURISM DESTINATIONS

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Abstract

Purpose – The paper explores the positive examples of chivalric festivals - the Renaissance Festival in Koprivnica (Pannonian part of Croatia) and the Knightly Days of Vrana, near Pakostane (coastal part of Northern Dalmatia). Based on the analysis of the current situation, the paper defines the goals and strategies for the development and transformation of these events into brands and identity of the micro-destinations. In the necessary synergy of all stakeholders, special emphasis is put on the involvement of the local residents in differentiating both present and future events.

Methodology – The paper develops the theoretical determinants of festival tourism in destination development with practical implementation. It explores the tourists' level of expectations and satisfaction, as well as the views of management and indigenous residents on the situational analysis and scenario development of the festival. The authors suggest ways of innovating operational strategies for the development of both the festival and the integral product of the destination as the basis for repositioning and developing into an attractive festival tourism destination.

Findings – The paper determines and validates the festival possibilities based on history and tradition, with the goal of tourism destination rejuvenation. The young indigenous generations need to recognize the importance of preserving and reviving the history and turn into the key generators of heritage valorisation in the creation of distinctive festivals based on active involvement of tourists.

Contribution – The paper presents the possibilities of historical festivals in the achievement of sustainable development and valorisation of history and tradition that grows into the key motive for the arrival of tourists, the generator of tourist spending, and the destination's trademark.

Keywords festival tourism, sustainable development, repositioning, indigenous residents

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