

# MANAGERIAL RESPONSE TO GLOBAL TOURISM TRENDS IN ACCOMMODATION: AN ILLUSTRATION FROM TWO DESTINATIONS

**Ruhet GENC**

Beykent University, Turkey

**Ige PIRNAR**

Dokuz Eylul University, Turkey

## ABSTRACT

*Since tourism is a highly profitable industry with a constant growth rate, the competition among establishments is very severe. In order to stand out from this competition crowd and to appeal to the consumers with differential advantage, the hotel managers should try their best to keep up with constantly changing trends in tourism. Therefore, for long term success in hospitality, managers need to be sensitive to the global tourism trends and look for ways to tap into those markets through meeting the changing needs of consumers. Due to this approach, this paper addresses the key trends in the global tourism market. It also tries to determine the level of managerial response to these trends by top managers of 4&5 star hotels in two important tourism destinations in Turkey, namely Izmir and Kusadasi. The results of the study may be an indicator for the areas of improvement.*

**Keywords:** *Tourism Trends, Turkey, Managerial Response*

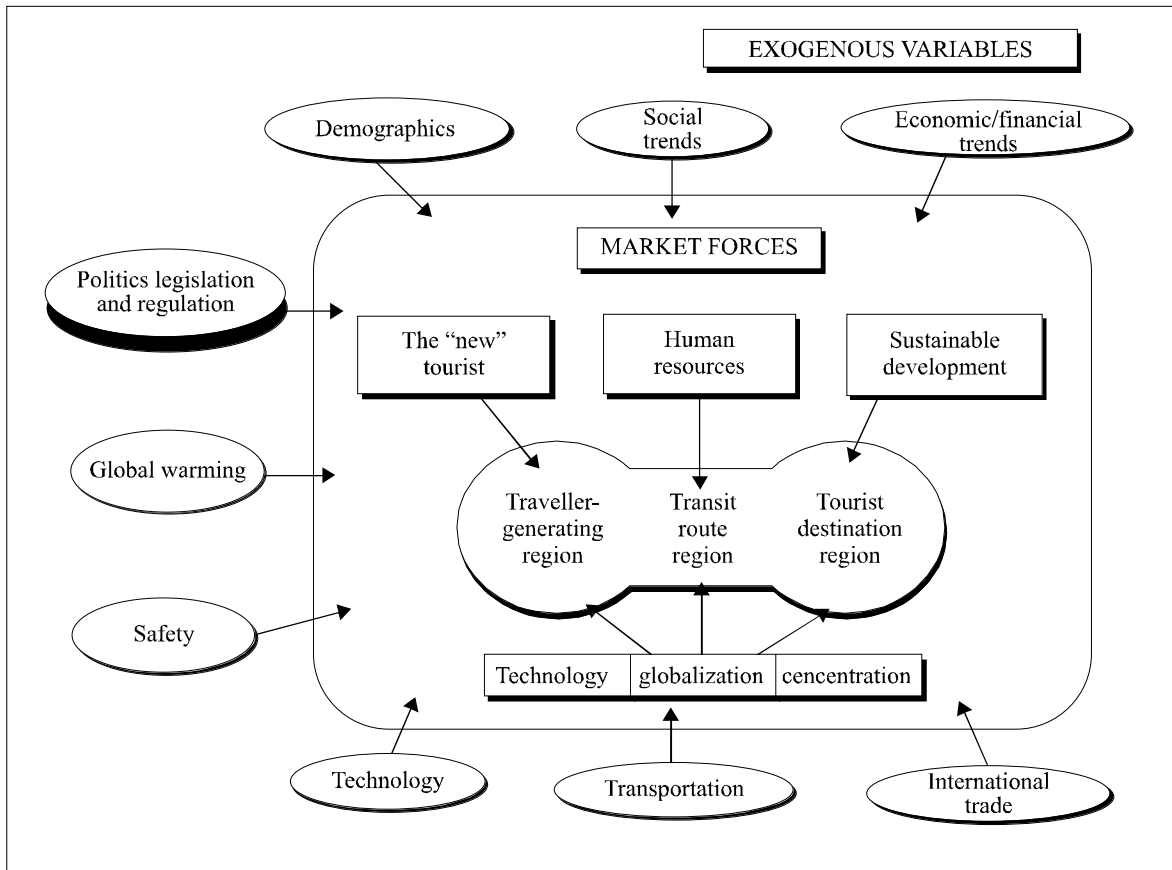
## INTRODUCTION

Tourism, being one of the worlds' fastest growing industries with the annual 4-5 % increase rate brings high competition within the sector itself. For Turkey, it is one of the most important sectors with 22.5 million international arrivals and US\$18.5 million receipts, and Turkey is in the top 10 of the global list. Though Turkey is quite successful in the world tourism market, in order to keep the share it has to keep up with the trends both in demand and supply sides of the industry. In order to stand out from the crowded competition, following up the trends in both supply and demand is an important role of tourism managers.

Amongst the management and marketing techniques in response to changing trends are: applying flexible management styles; applying updated marketing techniques; applying strategic planning; and focusing on effectiveness, efficiency and yield management. Tourism firms try to meet changing demand by putting emphasis on issues such as customer relationship marketing (CRM), e-tourism, quality management, brand loyalty, public relations (PR), crisis management and positive media relationships.

## Global Tourism Trends

According to UNWTO's reports, tourism is set to become one of the greatest industries in the world in the near future, with expectations reaching up to 1.6 billion international tourist arrivals by the year 2023, up from 900 million in 2007. Though this forecast is



**Figure 1:** Forces of change in the tourist system

quite positive, it is expected that all the destinations may not get the full share of this increase. The destinations that will be positively affected will be the ones that are using creative, innovative marketing and management techniques, which define their market segments correctly and use suitable marketing strategies that fully cover the changing needs and trends of their customers.

There seems to be four factors (Baraner, 2006) that lead to changing global trends

and consumer behavior in tourism, which may be stated as:

- 1) Improvements in the marketing technology and communication,
- 2) General economic conditions,
- 3) The individualization of consumers and,
- 4) The need for growing security.

Current forces for the trends and change in tourism are summarized in Figure 1.

Thus the main global tourism trends of the future may be stated as:

- 1) Price sensitive consumers trying to maximize the value of the service purchased: Due to global financial crisis that affects all the sectors, it is predicted that the consumers will get very price sensitive in 2009 and part of 2010. To respond to this sensitiveness, it is suggested that the tourism providers may use flexible rating systems like creating different rate groups as Rack Rate, Rack Rate less 10%, etc (Forrester, 2008), Also using travel package and hotel catalogues without stating the prices might be a clever strategy. In addition offering extra amenities and services for standard priced services may also be a good strategy to appeal to consumers who are looking for the highest value. For example, German tourism market trends researchers, indicate that for this market Mediterranean looks like the attractive destination, where Tunisia, Turkey and Croatia might be the market leaders with their competitive price advantage (Ergüven, 2008).
- 2) Increase in e-tourism rate: The use of Internet in travel-planning / booking by both business and leisure travelers seems set to continue to grow but at a significantly lower rate than previous years (Yesawich, 2007). Direct on-line bookings by

customers are predicted to make up a significant market share by 2010 with access available to most of the population in industrialized countries; "Virtual tourists" will have an increasing demand for multi-media travel information and Interactive TV and mobile devices will increasingly be used for the distribution of tourism products and services.

The majority of tourism organizations are predicted to use Intranets, products and services will reach a much higher level of personalization together with a corresponding demand. The rising share of people over 50s in the industrialized countries will effect a higher demand for e-services related to foreign travel, particularly to long haul destinations and travel for culture purposes as well as eco-tourism and further growth of "time poor" - "money rich" people will constas a high demand for short time holidays while, on the other hand, all-inclusive holidays will be demanded by a large number of people.

3) Expectation for quality service: Today, expectations of a tourist are increased who look for more convenience and value. It is predicted that the level of service quality expectation will increase and the desire for improved services and better working conditions will rise. It is predicted there will be an increase from by 2015 in the areas of:

- Preference for electronic check-in procedures from 23% to 90%
- Preference for online booking 37% to 70%
- Business class air travel 17% to 33%
- Premium class rail travel 22% to 25%

4) Changes in business tourism: Changes in the global economy will have the biggest impact on business travelers in the next decade, according to new research out from Barclaycard Business. The research reveals that long haul air and rail services will see the highest growth with business travel to global destinations (Koumelis, 2006). The principal long term factors affecting hotel demand may be shortly stated as; globalization of industry, demographic and social changes, increasing leisure and holiday time, changes in consumer preferences, economic growth and the overall investment environment. Also, due to crisis some business travel is expected to get shorter or replace with virtual ones like videoconferencing.

5) Family travel (adults with children) is expected to continue to grow at a faster rate than all other forms of leisure travel, as both parents and grandparents continue to look at travel as one way in which to

"reunite" families (Yesawich, 2008). 2009 trends indicate tat relative travel will almost double this year due to financial crisis (Ergüven, 2008).

- 6) Shorter holidays: Duration of leisure travels also (along with the business travel) tend to be shorter due to financial crisis which may also positively impact the demand for closer and neighbor destinations (TUYED, 2007). Short term influences include; cost of travel, price changes and exchange rate parities, travel barriers, marketing and promotion, as well as extraneous factors including legislative/regulatory changes, political stability, technological developments, trading developments, transport developments, and the safety of travel.
- 7) Price wise comparison: Price wise comparison shopping seems to become more commonplace in 2009 and further. Quality/price ratio and the service value perceived will be more meaningful for travelers which makes marketing efforts more and more indispensable.
- 8) Increase in the demand for alternative tourism types: A number of alternative tourism types appear every year as international trade and tourism is increasingly offering a range of different types of products like cultural and heritage tourism, golf tourism, medical tourism, sports tourism, religious tourism, eco-tourism, religious tourism, yachting, sport tourism, MICE and others.
- 9) Hotel trends: Not only the demand for alternative tourism types, but also the supply side is changing. In order to answer the needs for this change, the lodging facilities tend to specialize in areas like green hotels, thematic hotels, spa hotels, convention hotels, all-suite hotels, etc. Time and cost factors influence hotel building programs. The hotel of the future may be one that is conceived as an "integrated environment design", the form of which may be determined by advanced building technology and innovative computerized systems.
- 10) Continued concern for safety and security in tourism (Baraner, 2006)
- 11) Influence of mega events (including festivals) on tourism.
- 12) Strategic tourism planning applications for tourism establishments, communities, regions and nations.
- 13) Introduction of new tourism products; like space tourism, Feng Shui spas, adventure tourism, boutique jet airlines, caravanning and slow / relaxation tourism (Kofteoglu, 2008).
- 14) Application of destination management and master

planning.

15) Sustainability and ecological supply of goods and services (New Sabah Times, 2008)

16) Tourism media using new channels and tools like movies (Lord of the Rings, The Last Samurai, Troy, The Edge of Reason, Oceans Twelve, The Motorcycle Diaries, The deserts of Morocco, The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe and Cold Mountain) and stories and books etc. Among the destinations which had demand increase due to the movies' impacts are (Kobifinans, 2008):

- New Zealand (Lord of the Rings-2000)
- Cephalonia (Captain Corelli's Mandolin 2001)
- Thailand (The Beach 2000)

- Malta (Troy 2004)

- Kenya (Out of Africa 1985)

17) The cruise industry will continue to enjoy remarkable growth (annual 8-10% increase)

18) Privatization -that is, the transfer of public ownership of manufacturing or services enterprises to private parties- is a policy option being actively pursued in countries all over the world. The trend toward privatization evolved from a growing realization by governments that state enterprises which are generally much less efficient in the use of capital and labor than private companies in making products and providing services.

Table 1 below shows the summary of the stated trends and how tourism development has changed.

**Table 1.**

<p><b>Demographic factors</b>, especially:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•A smaller number of households;</li> <li>•A dominant model of family 2+1;</li> <li>•Increasing number of single people;</li> <li>•Increasing number of childless couples;</li> <li>•Increasing number of working women.</li> <li>•Late marriages</li> </ul>	<p><b>Political factors</b>, especially:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Continuing challenges in security, terror, health;</li> <li>International power evolving; localization</li> <li>•Changes in Central-West Europe;</li> <li>•Integration of the European Union;</li> <li>•Liberalization of international migrations;</li> <li>•Unstable political situation in many regions of the world;</li> <li>•International terrorism;</li> <li>•Increased importance of safe travel</li> </ul>
<p><b>Social &amp; cultural factors</b>, especially:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Shortened time of working, more free time and longer vacations;</li> <li>•Ageing populations.</li> <li>•Individuals seeking 'authentic' tourism experiences.</li> <li>•Growth will occur in holidays for the retired and for single people.</li> <li>•Changes in tastes—holidays are becoming more specialized, earlier retirements;</li> <li>•Increasing number of "two-income" households;</li> <li>•Conflicts between identity and modernization, especially in developing countries</li> </ul>	<p><b>Economical factors</b>, especially:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Diffusion of information technology.</li> <li>•Increasingly dynamic private sectors.</li> <li>•Continued deregulation/liberalization of international travel.</li> <li>•A bigger disproportion between rich and poor countries;</li> <li>•A bigger financial crisis in a number of countries</li> <li>liberalization and development of an international trade;</li> <li>•Globalization continued growth (esp China, India);</li> </ul>
<p><b>Technological factors</b>, especially:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Automation and computerization;</li> <li>•Developing of telecommunication</li> <li>•Developing of computing systems;</li> <li>•Developing of transport and infrastructure (airports, motorways);</li> <li>•Use of modern technologies in everyday life (household articles, sport, tourist equipment);</li> <li>•Developing of soft technologies;</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ecological factors</b>, especially:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Intensifying population growth, development, urbanization</li> <li>•A greater ecological awareness in society;</li> <li>•Global warming affecting climate</li> <li>•Government's growing concern with environment;</li> <li>•Conflicts causes by developing of a big agglomerations ( in developing and developed countries);</li> <li>•Development of the ecological movement</li> <li>•International collaboration in field of natural and cultural environment protection;</li> </ul>

**Table 1: Summary of the mega trends and tourism development**

Adapted: Larry D., Edwards D., Mistilis N., Roman C., Scott N. and Cooper C., "Mega Trends Underpinning Tourism to 2020", Available at:

[http://www.crctourism.com.au/WMS/Upload/Resources/bookshop/FactSheets/80046\\_Dwyer\\_SUMMARY\\_SHEET.pdf](http://www.crctourism.com.au/WMS/Upload/Resources/bookshop/FactSheets/80046_Dwyer_SUMMARY_SHEET.pdf).

## Managerial Response from the Supply Side

It is quite clear that if hotels want to be in the market 10 years from now, hotel managers need to be sensitive to the global tourism trends and look for ways to tap into those markets through meeting the changing needs of consumers. To highlight this fact, the literature review on reactions of managers to the tourism trends are summarized below.

- 1) Changing trends in marketing applications (CRM and other personalized marketing techniques like brand management): Marketing has evolved through lots of stages from production era whereas the latest trend is almost tailor made services for customers. Customer value and satisfaction are today's key words.

Customer value is the difference between the customer benefits from owning and/or using a product and the costs of obtaining the product. Customer satisfaction is perceived value delivered relative to a buyer's expectations (Kotler, Bowen and Makens, 2006). CRM relates to activities of forming special behaviors among specific people and groups and the ways to change these behaviors (Fisk, 2008). It is about providing successful and continuous communication between the marketer and customers (Acuner, 2001:25). Tourism is not behind since it uses CRM and custom made, prepared and designed travel packages and transportation to tourists from different segments. As a tradition, hotel managers used to focus on cost efficiency in the first place, though the strategic value-chain is gaining recent importance. A strategic value-chain perspective forces logistics systems to be realigned and restructured so that they gain competitive differentiation and advantage in the industry (Cravens and Piercy, 2003:368). Though customer centered value management is mandatory for success, it is not enough since today's business' marketing efforts are aimed to build brand equity to build relations with existing customers and to collect valuable customers for almost lifetime span. In that sense the marketing trend for logistics is changing from customer centered service to life time relationship, the so called customer relationship marketing (CRM). Branding and co-branding strategies also helps achieving customer loyalty and cost sharing among related organizations Hotels use branding according to their segments' differing needs. Table 2 below shows an example of Holiday Corporations' lodging establishments use 6 different brands and quality levels according to its segment groups.

**Table 2**

Brand	The Characteristic of the Hotel
Crowne Plaza	The lower limit of 5 star hotel
Holiday Inn	Traditional middle class
Hampton Inn	Budget group
Embassy Suites	All suite
Residence Inns	For long stays
Harrahs Hotels	ABD casino hotels

**Table 2:** Holiday Corporation's Different Hotel Brands Aiming to Different Market

Reference: Segments Chuck Y. Gee (1994), International Hotel Management, AHMA, Michigan.

- 2) Applying TQM and other quality measures and standards: Quality may be described as the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy customer needs (Kotler, Bowen and Makens, 2006). Total Quality Management (TQM) on the other hand is a management approach where culture, attitude and organization of a company aims to satisfy customers. The culture requires quality in all aspects of the company's operations, with processes being done right the first time and defects and waste eradicated from operations and regarding staff as internal customers who should be motivated also. TQM, is a method by which management and employees can become involved in the continuous improvement of the production of goods and services (Hashmi, 2008). It is a management philosophy that seeks to integrate all organizational functions (marketing, finance, design, engineering, and production, customer service, etc.) to focus on meeting customer needs and organizational objectives (Tavmergen, 2002). Though used in production sectors till 1950s, the concept is new to hospitality, with franchise and management hotels choosing to adapt and apply their own quality systems.
- 3) Privatization and government and private cooperation: According to the UNWTO Business Council, the current trend for promoting destinations in almost all regions of the world is through some sort of destination management organizations. Many countries are aiming towards semi-public but autonomous tourism organizations involving a partnership with both private sector and regional and/ or local authorities. Over the last decade the functions and responsibilities of governments as well as the private sector and society has changed a lot (Hawkins, <http://www.gwutourism.org/dm.htm>). The

traditional approach was centralized promotional and developmental efforts in tourism whereas it is changed towards decentralization of tourism management and promotion and towards public-private sector partnership. With such change, the new, flexible and multi-disciplinary approaches to destination management are needed. In Turkish tourism, public and private cooperation and privatization had its effects also:

- In Turkey, Istanbul Congress Palace, Cesme Hotel and its annexes, Kemer Marina Hotel, Ilica Motel, Elmadag Auberge, 2 lands in Istinye, Akcay Holiday Resort, Bodrum, Kusadasi and Kemer Marinas have been privatized during 1991-1999 period.
  - Turban withdrew from the operations and administration of Amasya, Samsun, Corum, Erciyes, Urfa and Adalya Hotels, Kaleici Marina, Gumuldur and Marmaris Holiday Resort and Beldibi and Belek tourism establishments.
  - Tender announcement for the block sale of Abant Hotel, Carlton Hotel's land and a land in Akcay has been published on September 29, 1999. No bids were received for Akcay's land and tender was annulled.
- 4) Applying market-oriented strategic planning and using strategies according to SWOT Analysis Results: Market oriented strategic planning is the managerial process of developing and maintaining a feasible fit between the organization's objectives, skills and resources and its changing market opportunities (Kotler, Bowen and Makens, 2006). Strategic planning is a process that makes it possible for the organization to achieve its pre-stated mission and goals (Kotler and Armstrong, 2001:47). Since strategy is involved, it deals with long term planning (Evans, Campbell and Stonehouse, 2002). It is obvious that not just in the macro terms, but it micro level strategic plan application is necessary for long term success in changing environmental conditions.
- 5) Reducing vulnerability in risky situations and constant crisis management efforts: Hotel companies often consider high risk countries for potential investment or operation because as the international hotel industry becomes increasingly competitive, areas become overbuilt and prime locations become scarce or very expensive to develop. Potential profitability, lower development costs, a ready and inexpensive supply of labor and political risk insurance offer a way for international hotel companies to lessen their vulnerability. Companies may purchase insurance to reduce the risk from

war, civil strike, currency inconvertibility or contract problems. In highly volatile situations, the conventional wisdom is that companies should delegate complete authority and responsibility to the local unit management who is closer to the source of the problem will be more attuned to the realities of the operating environment and be able to make rapid decisions.

As security becomes of more concern in tourism, it is a common sense to be prepared at crisis at all times, though tourism managers are seldom trained or prepared to handle crises resulting from financial, terrorist, medical or political activities. The consequences are (Gee, 1994):

- severe disruption of operations
- increased government intervention or regulations
- compromised public safety
- loss of public goodwill
- financial strain
- unproductive use of management's time
- loss of employee morale and support

Having an ongoing team for crisis management does help to manage the situation at the optimal effectiveness. Thus with continuous teams and preplanned activity lists in the middle of the crisis (Pirnar, 2005):

- Personnel and guest safety, electrical power, ongoing communication and running water are provided
  - Media is handled efficiently.
  - Careful planning and committed management enables a business to survive and even prosper under the most challenging operating conditions.
- 6) Global tourism takes into account local differences in culture: Think globally, act locally was the marketing and managing slogan for 1990s. In order to build an integrated network of hotels scattered around the world, comprehensive and appropriate planning and control help hotel managers to view future clearly and do teamwork amongst international staff of the hotel within the chain. Many restaurant and hotel chains apply this strategy, though in transportation undifferentiated global strategies are common.

Hotels operating in the international arena need to have non-rigid corporate cultures and strategies in order to promote profits, productivity, quality, and guest satisfaction at the unit level. The successful international hotel promotes a company culture

that encourages sensitivity to the different expectations and perceptions of its employees and guests (Gee, 1994).

7) E-tourism is widely used in the industry, thus networks are formed among related establishments that increase synergy (Kofteoglu, 2009). Technology has enabled tourism firms with unlimited source and quantity of information lately. Information technology has also provided tourism operations with tools to process data at speed and accuracy that could have not been imagined just a few years ago. Internet and the web-based technologies have increased the speed of accumulation, process and interpretation of data and information.

To get the highest benefit from today's technology, tourism professionals should have a working knowledge of the system and ways to analyze and interpret. For the information to be useful, information flow, coordination and communication between tourism firms is vital. Although large quantities of data are available, the important thing is helping people use them as an answer to their marketing efforts, solution to their problems or what ever they want it for.

8) Tourism establishments do understand the importance of various travel distribution systems: An important element in the marketing strategy of any hotel is the system of marketing channels through which products and services are sold to their ultimate buyers. The term travel distribution system refers to a series of marketing or selling institutions and how a sells its services to buyers through travel agencies, tour operators, free lines and others. Navigation and GPS technologies are providing endless opportunities to hoteliers and consumers (Kofteoglu, 2008). Today, tourism organizations are virtually using computer reservations systems (CRSs) and this system will allow reservationists to conclude sales more easily and to place guests in the right hotel at the right price anywhere in the world. Some of the CRS are Sabre, Apollo, Galileo, Amadeus, Abacus, etc (Zengin, 2004).

## METHOD

A study in lodging was conducted in two important tourism regions in Turkey, namely Izmir and Kusadasi. The aims were to identify how the managers in the lodging sector were coping with the changing trends. Tracking trends according to changing needs is part of the strategic performance indicators for the establishments. Thus, the reactions of hotel managers

are quite meaningful in this regard. The subtopics may be stated as:

- The managerial changes that affect the organization
- The role of effectiveness, efficiency and yield management techniques
- Application of CRM and brand loyalty,
- Application of PR and planned media relations
- Application of QM, TQM, HACCP and such quality systems
- Applications of different themes, appealing to different tourism demands
- Application of crisis management tools and techniques
- Application of strategic planning and SWOT Analysis
- Application of E-tourism

The scope of the study includes 12 hotels (4 or 5 stars) from Izmir, Çesme and Kusadasi. A semi-structured prepared survey of open and closed ended questions was conducted to collect information about how the hotels are adapting to changing trends in the managerial perspective. Since it was conducted in an interview style, the participants were able to add their personal views on the topic which was also taken into account while working on the results. Top management levels such as department heads and general managers were requested to fill out the questionnaires owing to their knowledge of the hotel's operations. Another reason for the hotel selection choice is the assumption that they should be the ones that have the need, capability and action to keep up with the changing global trends.

There are some limitations of the study conducted. Firstly, the areas chosen, Izmir, Çesme and Kusadasi, means the findings related cannot be generalized to Turkish tourism suppliers as a whole. Secondly, there was an unwillingness of managers to talk about their managerial inefficiency in keeping up with the trends as that may be perceived as being unsuccessful. Thirdly, the sample consists of only 4 and 5 star hotels, which do not take other hotel types and their strategies into. Finally, the sample group belongs to a tourism destination, meaning that if the study is conducted in the area where tourism is not well developed, the findings could have been different, therefore it is not correct to generalize the findings, but suggestions may be helpful for the firms operating in the same conditions.

## FINDINGS

Table 3 below summarizes the results of the findings from the study.

**Table 3**

Managerial Responses to Trends	N=12 Hotels	%
Flexible management styles and organization	6	50
Application of motivational factors	12	100
Managerial importance given to issues like; effectiveness, efficiency and yield management techniques	6	50
Application of CRM and brand loyalty	12	100
Application of professional crisis management	3	25
Application of planned media relations	2	17
Application of QM	12	100
HACCP	4	33
Waste management, ISO14000	(some app) 2	17
Application of strategic planning	12	100
Having alternative plans and application of flexible planning	12	100
SWOT Analysis	10	83
Applications of different themes and tourism types	11	91
Application of E-tourism	12	100

**Table 3: Managerial Responses of Izmir and Kusadasi Hotels to Changing Tourism Trends**

- The first question asked was about whether the hotel management adjusts to necessary changes and uses flexible structuring accordingly. Only 6 of the respondents mentioned that they were doing necessary adjustments, keeping up with the trends, whereas the other 6 mentioned that due to their central management, they could not apply any necessary changes.
- The second question involved staff motivation techniques and all of the participant hotels mentioned that they apply motivational techniques.
- The answer of the third and fourth question reveals that the concepts of effectiveness, efficiency and yield management are especially important, since all participant hotels are working on flexible pricing though 6 of them mentioned that their efforts were not enough.
- As the answers to 5-7 marketing questions indicate, all hotels use CRM and brand management.
- Questions 8-10 indicate that although crisis management is found to be very important, only 3 of the hotels have crisis teams, however they do not work on a continuous basis, rather they meet when there is an urgent situation. In addition only 2 of them are planning professional media relations.
- Answers to questions 11-14 indicate that, although quality management is found to be important, hotels do not use their own quality systems in the management contract or franchise system they belong to.
- Answers to question 15-18 indicate that all hotels use planning and 10 do SWOT analysis.
- Coping with trends means improving the hotel facilities accordingly and 11 of them are using themed refurbishments, 5 of them are giving emphasis to spa and fitness activities and also convention tourists. Again, 8 of them are trying to appeal to business tourism with special product and services. In addition, most of them could not supply special travel packages like eco-tours and cultural tours of the area, though their guests increasingly demand these specialized products.
- The last set of questions related to e-tourism and internet usage. All of the hotels interviewed have their own web pages and are applying e-tourism. The percentages differ in registration processes from 10% to 50%.

## DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that adjusting to necessary changes and using flexible structuring accordingly is not very common in the hospitality in the regions studied. There are still many hotels that do not use flexible organization charts and systems but rely on rigid central management that is slow to react to rapid changes. The same goes with managerial importance



given to issues like; effectiveness, efficiency and yield management techniques, the crucial profit maximization methods all hotels should be using, especially in this period of global crisis. Some hotels complained about their very low occupancy rates and stated that their efforts in this area were not adequate or useful. The most important areas to work on were stated as profit maximization and yield management. All respondents seem to be sensitive to application of motivational strategies and staff satisfaction, quality management programs in general and e-tourism in general. However, when analyzed in detail, though all of them seemed to apply these programs, there was much variation among them. The results of open ended questions indicate that there were still many issues that hotel managers should consider. For example, they all seem to use e-tourism for reservations but the actual purchase is not done by e-trade due to security reasons. The main complaints in this topic were stated as the lack of qualified personnel, updating problems and technical problems involved.

Though quality management is found to be important, hotels do not use their own quality systems in the management contract or franchise system they belong to. Among the ISO group only HACCP is used in 4 hotels in F & B departments. The environment sub-quality group seemed to be the most neglected, since no participant was applying effective waste management practices.

Coping with trends means improving the hotel facilities accordingly and many of them are trying to keep up with this trend with different services and themes. One of the managers' answer was "If we want to be in the market 10 years from now, we have to change as the market changes. Some of the new products coming identified as emerging trends were stated as: health and wellness tourism, convention tourism and eco-tourism".

Responses show that all hotels use planning but they have flexible plans because all of them believe that the political and economic conditions in Turkey are very fragile and volatile. They mentioned that they do not believe in very rigid strategic plans, though all of them are working on them. Also, none of them apply SWOT from top to bottom, yet 10 of them worked on their own properties' strengths and weaknesses and had completed competitive analysis. Although they seem to apply strategic planning, they are not open to environmental threats and opportunities, which make them very vulnerable to changes.

The responses about marketing techniques indicate that all hotels use CRM, but they are not good at co-

branding. In branding aspects, franchise hotels use the advantage of already established brand names. However, except one, they mentioned that they were not applying any extra effort to the brand concept. In the others, only top management deals with crisis situations. Crisis management and professional media relations seem to be the areas where improvement is needed.

## CONCLUSION

Any hotel that wants to maintain or increase the market share it has needs to keep up with the trends both in demand and supply sides of the industry. In order to stand out from the crowd of severe competition, following up the trends in both supply and demand sides plays an important role. Among the changing management and marketing techniques for addressing changing trends are; applying flexible marketing techniques, applying strategic policies, focusing on effectiveness and yield management. Tourism firms try to meet the needs of changing demand by applying CRM, e-tourism, data mining, PR, crisis management and having positive media relationships.

Hotel managers need to develop strategies to handle crises situation and specific guidelines for crises management to minimize risk. Strategic plans for media management during a crises situation should also be enhanced.

Although hotels in this region will increasingly have to employ extensive branding and marketing strategies, it seems in reality the emphasis is on CRM and customer satisfaction whereas brand loyalty is only kept to the franchise organizations with already established well known brands. Regarding this concept, co-branding is not utilized at all. With advances in co-branding, hotel customers obtain an assurance of quality. In this way, hotels can provide a standard and consistent pricing and services to its customers.

Future trends in environment and waste management will deter the high rate of construction development for hotels. Certain environmental regulations will be required for all hotel managers. Thus, to gain competitive advantage, hotel managers should adopt up-to-date environmental trends, policies and legislations. "Self-regulatory" (Gee, 1994) guidelines can be prepared to enhance the hotel's environmental sensitivity. Waste can be recycled or the amount of waste can be decreased. The water waste can be minimized. Energy can be conserved in the hotel. In short, the hotel managers can incorporate environmental sensitivity and efficiency to their corporate culture.

In coming years, demand for online services of hotels will increase as more customers prefer electronic services for hotel selection (Ivey, 2006). Online reservations will increase and almost all tourism organizations will utilize internet services. In order to keep up with these trends, internet facilities of the hotels in the region should be enhanced with more qualified personnel by handling problems on software and hardware of computer, and internet connections.

## APPENDIX

### Interview Questions Used in the Interview

1. Are you adjusting to the necessary managerial changes and use flexible structuring accordingly?
2. Are you applying staff motivation techniques?
3. Are you using profit maximization and cost minimization techniques?
4. Name the methods and concepts that your hotel is using \_\_\_\_\_
5. Do you apply new marketing techniques like CRM?
6. Do you value customer loyalty? Explain
7. Do you give importance to branding/co-branding?
8. Is crisis management important?
9. Do you have specialized crisis management teams on the continuous period?
10. Are you planning and using professional media relations?
11. Do you believe in quality management?
12. How is your hotel responding to this need?
13. Do you apply HACCP?
14. Do you apply waste management in a professional manner? How are you with sustainable tourism?
15. Do you apply strategic planning?
16. How is it done? Please describe the process and contents?
17. Do you use flexible planning / alternative plans?
18. How do you apply SWOT analysis?
19. How do you cope with requests for different tourism services and trends?
20. Do you apply e-tourism?
21. Which areas are you more successful with (e.g. reservations, registration, selling, complaint management etc.)?
22. State your main complaints in e-tourism.

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