

# ***HOTELPLAN 2018***

**BOOK OF PROCEEDINGS**

**ZBORNİK RADOVA**



**2-3. novembar 2018.  
Beograd, Srbija**



7<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

## ***HOTELPLAN 2018***

**HOSPITALITY AS A QUALITY FACTOR OF TOURIST  
DESTINATION OFFER AND COMPETITIVENESS**

**2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2018  
BELGRADE, SERBIA**

### **BOOK OF PROCEEDINGS**



### **ZBORNİK RADOVA**

**The College of Hotel Management, Belgrade, Serbia**  
University of Prešov, Faculty of Management, Prešov, Slovakia  
Old Polish University in Kielce, Kielce, Poland  
Tourism College of Zhejiang, Hangzhou, China

**SEDMI MEĐUNARODNI KONGRES**

## ***HOTELPLAN 2018***

**GOSTOPRIMSTVO KAO FAKTOR KVALITETA PONUDE I  
KONKURENTNOSTI TURISTIČKE DESTINACIJE**

**02 – 03. November 2018.  
BEOGRAD, SRBIJA**

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## PREDGOVOR

Osnovni cilj kongresa HOTELPLAN 2018 je da okupi istaknute hotelijere, članove akademske i stručne zajednice, pružajući im mogućnost da kroz panel diskusiju i izlaganje referata razmene znanje, iskustvo i istraživačke rezultate iz domena savremene ugostiteljske teorije i prakse. Visoka hotelijerska škola predstavlja lidera u razvoju visokoobrazovanih stručnih kadrova iz oblasti ugostiteljstva, razvojno-istraživačkog rada i međunarodne saradnje. Njena uloga i nacionalni značaj je ove godine potvrđen i od strane Ministarstva prosvete, nauke i tehnološkog razvoja Republike Srbije kroz dodelu prestižne Svetosavske nagrade za doprinos obrazovanju, a prepoznata je i od strane renomiranih partnerskih visokoškolskih institucija iz inostranstva. Upravo takva reputacija obezbedila je da nam se kao suorganizatori kongresa HOTELPLAN 2018 pridruže i naši partneri iz Poljske - *College of Economy, Tourism and Social Sciences*, Kine - *Tourism College of Zhejiang* i Slovačke - *University of Prešov, Faculty of Management*.

Tema ovogodišnjeg kongresa je „Uloga ugostiteljstva u formiranju ponude i brendiranju turističkih destinacija“. Za Kongres je prijavljeno ukupno 112 radova, a posle postupka recenzije, uredništvo je za publikovanje i prezentaciju odabralo je 89 radova. Radovi su pristigli iz 14 zemalja, uključujući i Srbiju, pri čemu je 53 radova napisano na srpskom jeziku, a 36 radova na engleskom jeziku. Prihvaćeni radovi su, na osnovu tematike koju obrađuju, klasifikovani u tri tematska bloka u Zborniku radova:

- Ugostiteljski sadržaji turističke destinacije - hoteli i drugi oblici smeštaja, tradicionalna i kreativna gastronomija, raznovrsnost i kvalitet restoraterske ponude
- Razvoj turističke destinacije – identitet, brendiranje, menadžment kvaliteta, planiranje i održivost.
- Primena informacionih tehnologija u promociji i upravljanju turističkom destinacijom – digitalni marketing, internet, društvene mreže, interkulturalna komunikacija i strani jezici.

Za razliku od prethodnih godina kada su prihvaćeni radovi za Kongres publikovani u tematskom broju časopisa HotelLink, ove godine se prvi put objavljuje poseban Zbornik radova koji se nalazi pred Vama, a za koji je po ispunjenju neophodnih uslova podnet zahtev za kategorizaciju kao naučne publikacije.

Na kraju želeo bih da se zahvalim svim autorima radova na priložima, kao i recenzentima, tehničkom uredniku i lektorima za srpski i engleski jezik na trudu i znanju koje su uložili kako bi omogućili publikaciju ovog Zbornika radova kojim obeležavamo petnaestogodišnjicu od organizovanja prvog međunarodnog kongresa od strane Visoke hotelijerske škole strukovnih studija.

Beograd, 12.10.2018.

Predsednik međunarodnog naučnog odbora  
*dr Slavoljub Vičić*

## FOREWORD

The main goal of the congress *HOTELPLAN 2018* is to gather distinguished hoteliers, members of the academic and practical community, and give them an opportunity to exchange their knowledge, experience and research results in the field of the contemporary hospitality theory and practice in the form of panel discussion and paper presentation. The College of Hotel Management is the leader in the development of the higher-educated professionals in the fields of hospitality industry, research and development and international cooperation. This year, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia acknowledged the role of the college and its national importance by presenting it with a prestigious award "*Svetosavska nagrada*" for the contribution to education, and that role has been recognized by the College's renowned foreign partner colleges and faculties as well. That very kind of reputation has encouraged our partners from Poland - *College of Economy, Tourism and Social Sciences*, China - *Tourism College of Zhejiang*, and Slovakia - *University of Prešov, Faculty of Management* to join us as co-organizers of the congress *HOTELPLAN 2018*.

The theme of this year's congress is „Hospitality as a quality factor of tourist destination offer and competitiveness“. Altogether, a number of 112 papers had been submitted for the congress, and after the review process, the Editorial board chose 89 papers to be published and presented. The papers had arrived from 14 different countries, including Serbia, and 53 papers were written in the Serbian language, whereas 36 were written in the English language. The accepted papers, based on their topic, were categorized into three separate thematic fields in the Congress Proceedings:

- Hospitality facilities and tourist destinations - hotels and other forms of accommodation, traditional and creative gastronomy, diversity and quality of restaurant offer;
- Tourist destination development - identity, branding, quality management, planning and sustainability;
- The use of information technology in the promotion and management of a tourist destination - digital marketing, the internet, social media, intercultural communication and foreign languages.

Unlike the previous years, when the accepted papers had been published in the thematic journal *HotelLink*, this year, for the first time, a separate Congress Proceedings Book has been issued, for which a request for classification as a scientific publication has been filed.

Finally, I want to express my gratitude to all the authors for their contribution, along with the reviewers, technical editors and proofreaders for the effort and knowledge they had put into enabling the publication of the Congress Proceedings Book which commemorates the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first international congress hosted by the College of Hotel Management.

Belgrade, 12.10.2018.

The Chair of the International Scientific Committee  
*Slavoljub Vičić, PhD*



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# TRANSFORMING HOSPITALITY IN THE DIGITAL ERA, FACTOR FOR COMPETITIVENESS IN THE TOURIST DESTINATION

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## Abstract

With the constant grow of technology, strict regulations and changing customer preference, the hospitality industry is now forced to be highly vigilant. Today one of hospitality biggest challenge is to stay competitive in the market. And with the drastic changes that technology has brought to our lifestyles, the need to provide a fantastic customer experience and an expectation while embracing new market requirements are key factors for the digitization in the hospitality industry. The hospitality industry has always worked on enriching the customer experience, so right now, the hoteliers need to decide, will they adopt the digital technologies and stay competitive in the market, or stay satisfied with the current position and be left behind.

**Key words:** hospitality, destination, digitalization, competitive, market

## INTRODUCTION

We live in a digital world and digitalization is rapidly evolving in that world. Internet, gadgets, social media and different technological achievements constitute our everyday life. Digital innovations and technological novelties are engines of development and show their impact everywhere, especially in the field of manufacturing, ICT and other service industries. Given the fact that tourism is based on the cooperation between a wide range of services and products, the benefits of the digital revolution in the sector are quite obvious (Zsarnocky, 2018).

Digitalization has been much discussed and it seems to be reaching everything from one's personal life to work life. The term digitalization has been defined as "Integration of digital technologies into everyday life by the digitization of everything that can be digitized"(Poutanen, 2016).

Therefore, in the recent years, the hospitality industry has shown a high capacity of adapting to the requirements and modifications of the digital era



trends. Digital technologies have contributed to fundamental changes in the hospitality industry and determined a better understanding of the decision-making process of the travel, tourist's behavior during vacation and post vacation activities.

Digital innovation is key for the competitiveness of the hospitality industry in the tourist destination, as well in the tourist market. Digitalization and the emergence of new digital or online business models have a huge impact on hospitality in general. Meaning, with the appearance of digital tools, the hospitality industry can focus more towards loyalty and personalization of the guest's experience making herself competitive.

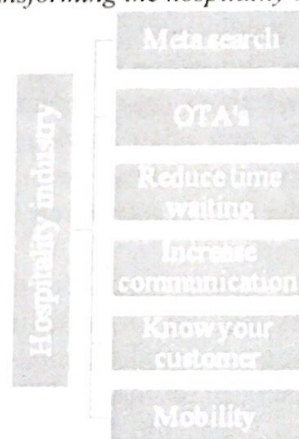
### WHERE SHOULD HOSPITALITY BEGIN?

Many believe that when it comes to the hospitality industry that there isn't a lot of ways to be innovative. But, since our lives become more focused on digital technologies, the transformation is affecting all industries, including the hospitality.

As we know, the primary goal of the hospitality is to sell out all of the capacities, and the way to do so is through the industry most important characteristic, and that is the customer's experience. Achieving the customer's experience gives a higher chance of competitiveness on the market, and differentiation and innovation are the key that should be taken into consideration when trying to stay competitive and deliver high value. Today, we might say, that the hotel lives up to the new rules of competition for guest attention. But, in order to stay in the lead and enjoy stable demand from the market, it is necessary that the hospitality made some adaption to the digital technologies.

In Table 1, the authors discuss the steps that the hospitality needs to take into the transformation in the digital era.

Table 1. *Steps for transforming the hospitality into digitalization*



Source: Author's research

The first thing that any lodging business needs to do, is to pay attention to the world's largest website TripAdvisor. Having your hotel registered on this website, will get you the possibility to add description, photos and showcase on the hotel page and free access to effective tools for business development. In addition, the evaluation criteria for services provided made available on TripAdvisor are overall satisfied, value (cost-benefit), location, sleep quality, rooms, cleanliness and service (Flores Limberger et al., 2014).

Comments on TripAdvisor are presented as a research and hotel reservation tool to be used during the decision process about reservations. In fact, these websites are constructed on a trust system, developed by allowing consumers to post positive or negative comments (Sparks & Browning, 2010).

Through the method of content analysis, O'Connor (2010) in his study confirmed that the data presented on TripAdvisor are significant and appropriate to use while planning trips.

Another step to be taken into the digitalization, is registration on the world leader in online hotel reservation Booking.com. Online booking represents the easiest and most efficient way to organize your holiday. Its advantage comes from saving time in terms of visiting numerous travel agencies, with offers for numerous tourist destinations opposite the option where with only one click you will be able to access your desired destination and booked it (Angelkova Petkova & Ristova, 2017).

With this known fact, this is another area where the hotel can share about its service and show why it is profitable for the guests to choose it.

To reduce queues, one of the possibilities for the lodging business to do is offer self-service options like check-in's or notifications. Since its becoming common place to skip the long ticket line at the airport and go straight to the security check in, thanks to mobile apps, you mind say the guests expect the same level of automation when they check in into the lodging capacity. Nowadays, there are more self-service options in the hospitality industry, such as self-reservation systems and self-check out system, self-serving in room mini bar and room service ordering system (Chen, 2011). With this implemented, the guests have guarantees that replies to their requests will be prompt.

Still, a note of caution for hoteliers and hotels is to not automate every response, especially if the guest is upset about something. Because, in that case the guests don't want to receive sympathetic responses, but also helpful ones given personally by the employees or management in the hotel.

Into digitalization, another step into that goes together with reducing times waiting is increasing communication flows. Many hotels already offer messaging options for increased communication between them and guests, where some are given the ability to text them through their own apps or through the well-known established messaging channels like WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger or SMS.

Yet, the real revolution is yet to come and is showing its first signs. When first introduced in 2016 by Facebook and Slack, it was clear that chatbots will



become an integral part of the future, a trend that many hotels will follow (Goncalves, 2016). One of the flexibility that chatbots can offer is that they are open 24/7 are frequently asked questions can be answered any time of the day or night.

Amid the implementing of digitalization, as a next step, hoteliers and hotels will need to pay attention that the today guest craves for personalization. In the case of preferred automate check-in instead of in-person interaction with the receptionist, the hotels will need to invest in a technology that will remember the guest's previous room, room service orders and other of the guest's preferences. Personalization, in simple terms "knowing your customer" has made hotels under a lot of pressure. But how to deliver a personalized experience to the guest in your hotel? Enabling the guests to take the power and control of their stay through new tools and technologies, gives the answer; well-developed apps that can enable the guests to personalize and control their stay in the hotel. From apps that enable guests to control their in-room televisions, their playlist, programme their lighting and air conditioning to choosing a scent for the room and even the start time to brew the first morning cup of coffee, these touch points are considered as opportunity for hotels to deliver a personalized experience. Still, it would be disastrous to forget the importance of human interaction, meaning the hotels should maintain the human touch.

Today's guests want mobility, flexibility and easy real time access to information, which leads us to the final step of implementation of mobile apps. Having mobile apps counts as a profitable tool in the hospitality industry. Overall the mobile evolution has contributed to enhancing the travel factor at large and created an interactive relationship between the guests and hotels, sharing information, ideas, pictures and impressions. Implementing the mobile apps into the working of the hotels, will encourage potential guests to check availability and book rooms, browse through the hotel services, view hotel pictures and read the reviews from just on their smartphones, even while they are on the move. Similarly, through mobile apps, hotels can keep guests updated about offers, events or other activities.

Since it's safe to assume that most people or potential guests have a smartphone, we want to point out that hotels need to invest in mobile apps because today they are part in the guest planning holiday. Into the three stages of planning: before, during and after the holiday, the hotels need to consider how to interact with them through the mobile apps. Before the holiday, hotels need to capture the attention of the potential guests with available, specific forms of programs such as incentives or loyalty programs. A push or notification in the period of consideration might be useful for a decision. During the holiday, the hotels can offer mobile check-ins and checkouts, using the smartphone as room key or even mobile requests program. After the holiday, the hotels should thank the guests and collect the feedback.



## DIGITALIZATION, KEY TO STAY COMPETITIVE IN THE TOURIST DESTINATION

The hospitality industry is about to enter into a digital war. To stay competitive on the market and satisfy today's guests and get better insight from their data, hotels will need to use digitalization against rivals, because if they don't the others will.

One reason for hotels to transform themselves into the digital era, is because the digitalization has the power to change all aspects of the guest's journey – enhancing experience before they go, while they're away and when they return. Meaning, it is not enough to have beautifully designed website anymore in order to generate more bookings and engage visitors, because the consumption habits of guests have changed and now we live in an area where digitalization is the key for the hospitality industry to survive.

When smartphones were first invented it was to make it easier to stay in the communication, but the reality is that now smartphones are used for so much more than communication, they're a necessary tool to make a person's life easier in performing tasks. Of course, this has begun to revolutionize the hospitality industry. Today's guests start their holiday on the digital technologies, the classical approach to agencies for booking hotels and gathering information is traded with Google, social and other applications (Stojkovic, 2013). By just using one example: Facebook – available at every step of the guest's experience holiday, from inspiration, research, booking, during the holiday and also as a reminder of the holiday, shows us that hotels need to start living up to the new rules of competition for the guest attention. So, hospitality industry needs to use digitalization to engage with its guests. Hotels need to be tackling both challenges and goals on multiple fronts, such as websites, social apps and OTAs. As said, digitalization will be crucial for providing hotels with the rising number of guests, and not only must hotels satisfy the demands of the digital-savvy guests, but they also need to understand how can extract meaningful insights from the digitalization and benefit even more from them. Because, with those insights, meaning analytics, hotels can use the data they receive and deepen their knowledge of the guests.

## MILLENNIALS, THE NEW EMERGING TREND THAT DRIVES HOSPITALITY TOWARDS THE DIGITALIZATION

Millennials, comprising individuals born between 1981 and the late 1990s, now represent the largest generational demographic in the world. Regardless of which years are used, Millennials are the biggest generational group since the Baby Boomers (people born between 1946 and 1964), representing 27% of the global population or about 2 billion people (Sillman et al., 2018). Millennials are in their young adulthood and, as such, are fast becoming the world's most important generational cohort for consumer spending growth, sourcing of



employees, and overall economic prospects. They will become even more important as previous generations retire and move into a life stage of lower consumption (Sillman et al., 2018). Given their significance, it's no wonder that they have become the focus of many businesses. In the hospitality industry, Millennials are also becoming the primary consumer market.

With Millennials being the most tech-savvy generation in history, where only a few can remember a world with cellphones, the Internet and of course the social media, Millennials are basically digital natives, and therefore, the hospitality industry beside from the need to transform to digitalization in order to stay competitive on the market, it needs to transform to digitalization in order to attract the largest consumer group as guests.

Millennials' engagement with digital technology is clearly evident, where the use of smartphones in the hospitality industry is more pervasive than many in the industry have thought. Millennials' guests don't want the traditional travel experience, and since they interact with technology while travelling, the hospitality industry needs to create more user friendly, up to date apps or programs to catch the attention of the millennial towards giving them insights about the locale's culture and traditions, cuisine and even arts and crafts in the destination, promote travel deals, promote itself on the OTAs and engage interaction with the millennials on through mobile apps on the social media because Millennials love to post about their trip on Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter while it's happening and later on reviewed.

The hospitality industry needs to reassess the service they offer – and redefine it, if aiming on Millennials as consumer market, but in general as well. This is a challenge, that the hotels around the world must accept to remain competitive and maximize the revenue opportunities that delivering individualized services from digitalization can bring.

## CALCULATING THE VALUE OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

The age of the digital era is upon us, and no industry is immune to its effects. In the hospitality industry, guests are demanding greater mobility, easier and flexible, more transparent access to all kinds of information that will ultimately please the user experience. But when it comes to resources and budget allocation in the lodging business, it's impossible to avoid the question "What's the value?".

First, to determine that transformation is the strategy, and digital is the way it's being executed in the hospitality industry, and the value is not created by technology, it only plays the role of a value catalyst.

The value of the transformation of hospitality into the digital era can be measured by:

- Enhance Guest Satisfaction Index (GSI) that will lead to loyalty programs,
- Better understanding of guests for a personalized experience,

- Better guest experience that aims to increase RevPAR (revenue per available room),
- Point-as-a-currency and mobile payments to help expand payment options while lowering operational costs and
- Services beyond the core of the lodging business.

To truly be able to calculate later the value of digital transformation in hospitality, the hotels need to develop the capabilities to track them in real time. They should:

- Establish and invest in the appropriate technological infrastructure,
- Optimize digital channels and
- Act based on the insights gained from the analyses of guests.

## CONCLUSION

Digital innovation is key for the competitiveness of the hospitality industry. Digitalization and the emergence of new digital business models have a huge impact on hospitality in general. With the appearance of online tools, guests are now organizing, booking and providing feedback on their holidays online at an ever growing rate. But in this digital world, booking a room is not the only objective of the hotel. The digital transformation expands to automatic check-in and notifications, electronic key cards, digital housekeeping, pocket concierge and many more. In order to remain competitive at the market and the tourist destination, hotels need to be flexible and forward thinking in their digital approach. Hotels need to take back control of their guests answering to their demands, meaning invest and transform into the digital era.

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