

CONTRACTUAL RELATIONS IN TOURISM: TOUR OPERATORS, TRAVEL AGENTS, CONSUMERS OF TOURIST SERVICES

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The modern travel and tourism industry has become complex, encompassing diverse organizations. The tourism product consists of various elements, involving transport, accommodation, catering, entertainment, natural resources and also other facilities and services. It cannot be examined prior to purchase or stored, and involves an element of travel. For all these reasons the value and importance of intermediaries through which those products are channelled in developed countries seem to be obvious. Tour operators and travel agents alleviate market inefficiency in terms of imperfect information or transaction costs, to name but a few. Although they do not cover the full extent of the distribution channel structure, it is the most significant single relationship in the targeted industry in both countries. Tour operators were chosen from a wide range of travel service providers. Their relationship with travel agents creates one of the several links within the channels of distribution of tourism products, and it is one of the most important. Therefore, the scope of the current research was limited to the relationships between travel agents and tour operators only.

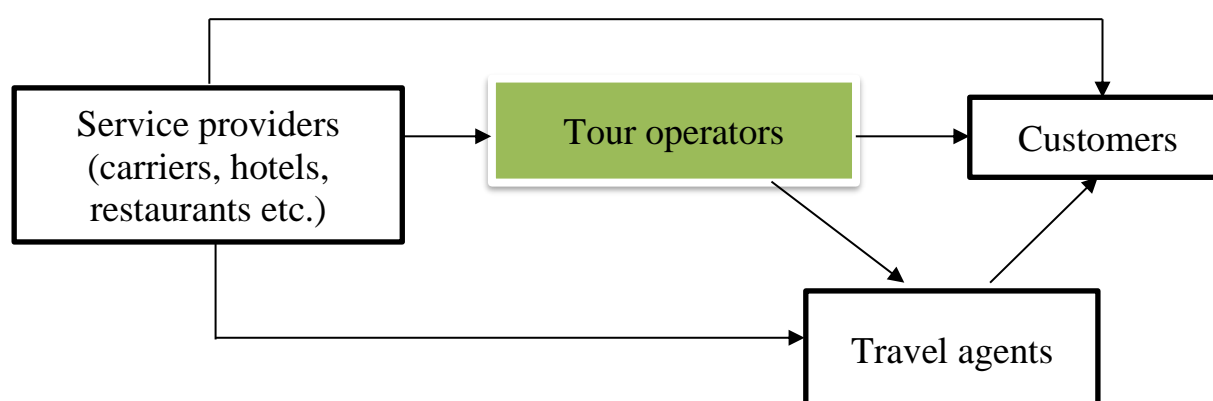
Before deciding to organize tours to new places, tourist companies should conduct marketing research. It is necessary to determine the needs, interests, and demand trends of customers. This helps to form a tour package that more fully satisfies the consumer's requirements. This research will also help guide tour planning and contract companies with service providers. Preparation work begins two years or more before the first tourists are sent to a new destination, a new program or a new country. Relations with partners providing services are formalized in the form of a contract. In each activity year, contract company:

- Name of the partner;
- The main subject of the contract;
- Validity period of the contract;
- Terms of concluding contracts;
- Specific information.

All conditions of cooperation should be specified in the form of a formal contract with the agent. If commissions are paid to tour agents, then there should be evidence of the amount of these commissions, as well as the nature of its possible growth. The rules should be clear and include the general conditions of all accommodation offered to the tourist market by this tour operator, as well as take into account the requirements of the partner performers. Naturally, the travel agency must offer the client to get acquainted with element of the type conditions are the general rules, which cannot be ignored. In the international experience, there have been cases

in which the courts considered the terms and conditions written in small print compared to the main text font to be insignificant and considered them as intermediate terms. In the rule and conditions in the catalog are written in small print compared to the main text, which causes the consumer to ignore it, as a result, the essence of the requirements is not well understood. If such a situation occurs, the measures of responsibility of the consumer who violated the terms will be significantly reduced or a decision will be made in his favor. One of the serious shortcomings of some publications is that the services that make up the tour are not listed for example, the type of boarding house is not indicated, it is not clear whether the visa and insurance are included in the tour price, as well as the absence of one or another service in the tour price is considered. The next issue is to note exactly what is not included in the net value. For example, sometimes the cost of air tickets is not taken into account, which significantly affects the final price of the tour. If as many additional services are added to the base price as possible, this will facilitate the subsequent calculation of the books, but each indicated price should be specified separately. Other typical mistakes are related to complex tables with many numbers that are difficult to understand, not detailed description of placement options and child discounts.

The process of organizing a tour is based on many stages, one of which is the traditional channel of using the skills and experience of tourist agents (indirect sales) is to distribute through Economic analysis of contracts describing the relationship between tour operators and travel agents, taking into account risk sharing, incentives and flexibility of contract alternatives. Emphasis is placed on the existing contracts with tour operators regulating the commercial and marketing aspects of the economic relationship with independent agents and agents belonging to the network, which are increasing in importance over time.



Relationships in distribution channels can be understood as all interactions, processes, flows that occur between companies (mainly travel agencies and tour operators) involved in the exchange of products and services. Due to the complexity and high reliance on the service component of tourism products, the importance of the typical eight flows is present in any other distribution channel (information, negotiation, financing, ordering, payment, physical possession or possession, etc. 'bearing and risk-taking) changes. Information becomes one of the most important flows because it represents the product and therefore helps buyers must make a purchase decision. Applied physical ownership of manufactured goods is not a factor in tourism. Relationships in channels include elements of cooperation and conflict. There is a high

level of information sharing, booking systems and advertising between travel retailers and tour operators. The partnership will benefit all channel partners with a clearly satisfactory level of sales. In addition, each channel partner offers services (and sometimes products) that are required by the other partner and eliminate the need for expensive investment by this partner. There are several potential paths of conflict. The most obvious is that the calculation of profits is one channel partner predetermines the distribution of profits to other partners. Additional factors of conflict This is the ability of any partner to seek an alternative supplier or retailer of services (or goods in non-tourism examples) and any formal or informal agreements between the two.

All tour operators, regardless of their size, offered information about products. The basic support created an essential part of the deal and took the form of brochures provided to a travel agent. One of the small independents noted that sometimes they got two different sets of information, but usually there was only one brochure designed for tourists. Therefore, some of the independents complained that 'the weight of brochures a small travel agency gets is absolutely enormous and the storage is difficult'. Some brochures were more popular amongst tourists than others. As the result independents would like to have more brochures of large tour operators, while these operators limited the numbers of brochures sent to the shops. There was a difference between an ordinary and a preferential agent, where the latter would be given more brochures and general support.