

Chapter 16

Effective Use of Website in Large-Scale Event Marketing: 25th East Mediterranean International Tourism and Travel (EMITT) Fair

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ABSTRACT

The Eastern Mediterranean International Tourism and Travel Fair (EMITT), which will be held for the 25th time in Istanbul in 2022, is preparing to host national and international industry professionals and thousands of tourists who want to take advantage of the new and exciting travel opportunities offered by holiday destinations and travel companies from all over the world. EMITT Fair will open its doors to visitors for the 25th time in 2022. A well-prepared website is of paramount importance to the event industry today. The Eastern Mediterranean International Tourism and Travel Fair is also one of the mega events considered among large-scale events within the scope of congress and fair organizations. Participation in events, which can result in national and international attention, usually begins with examining the websites prepared for the event. This study aims to examine the effectiveness of the website of the Eastern Mediterranean International Tourism and Travel Fair.

INTRODUCTION

Fairs are platforms that play an important role in helping businesses reach existing and potential buyers and intermediaries on the one hand and gathering information about the market and competitors on the other. For this reason, the participation of enterprises in national or international fairs is increasing (Çakıcı, 2009). Fairs, which provide an opportunity for participants to have quality and purposeful face to face communication with visitors and potential customers, help participants to introduce themselves in a short time and in the most effective way while enabling them to learn directly about customers' requests, expectations, complaints and satisfaction as well as capturing the related demand easily. As

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one of the most common types of events, fairs are one of the oldest types of events that have positive effects such as introducing new products, collecting information about competitors, identifying potential customers, taking orders, and establishing commercial relations for the future (Getz, 1997; Getz, 2008; Zamzuri, Awang & Samdin, 2011; Chen & Mo, 2012).

Events create social and cultural, physical, environmental, political and marketing effects on stakeholders such as local people, businesses, local governments, and destinations. These effects can be positive or negative. In this direction, a good planning and management process are necessary for the activities to be successful, to ensure their sustainability, to increase their positive effects and to reduce their negative effects. However, a comprehensive knowledge of activities is required for a correct and effective planning (Hall 1989; Turco, 1997; Zou & Ap, 2009; Getz, 1997; Bastida & Huan, 2014).

Today, internet technology is widely used in all segments of society. The internet technology has affected people as consumers as well as their normal lives and changed their habits and behaviors. Thanks to the websites, consumers have the opportunity to pre-examine goods and services. They can also find preliminary information about goods and services. Internet technology, which draws attention of many different sectors, also finds a place in the event industry. Internet technology provides various benefits to businesses in the marketing of the goods and services offered in the event industry (Tierney, 2000; Hung & Law, 2011). The most important internet technology marketing tools are websites. Websites can affect consumers' decision-making and their attitudes towards the business. Therefore, the websites are so important. E-consumers want websites that offer fast, user-friendly and high-quality service (Zhao & Gutierrez, 2001; Liu & Arnett, 2000).

A well-prepared website is of paramount importance to the event industry today. The Eastern Mediterranean International Tourism and Travel (EMITT) Fair, which will be held for the 25th time in Istanbul in 2022, is one of the mega events considered among large-scale events within the scope of congress and fair organizations. Participation in events, which can result in national and international attention, usually begins with examining the websites prepared for the event. This study aims to examine the effectiveness of the website of the Eastern Mediterranean International Tourism and Travel Fair.

BACKGROUND

The Concept of Event Marketing

Events first emerged as a marketing communication strategy in 1980 in Germany in response to significant changes in both the marketing environment and consumer behavior (Wohlfeil & Whelan, 2005). Because the mass media used by national and international companies are more expensive and less effective, it has been revealed that event marketing offers a suitable alternative when used in coordination with other elements in integrated marketing communication and plays an important and key role in establishing direct contact with consumers (Fan & Phitzenmaier, 2002; Liu, Liu, Liu, & Huang, 2019). Event marketing is based on the creation of a strong communication program that explains the goals of the event, and event management, organizers, and service marketing that keeps consumers together, determines the demands and needs of consumers and produces products and services to meet those needs (Tolan, 2014). Therefore, it is possible to define event marketing in its broadest form as follows: Event marketing is the process of integrating various communication channels within an event theme. The motivation that is effective in marketing the event is to reach the target market in the most effective way

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