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Is Agrotourism Popular on the Internet?

Je li agroturizam popularan na Internetu?

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ABSTRACT

There is growing literature on the importance of the Internet, such as the growing importance of the agri/agrotourism role in the tourism industry, but with little inspection of the relationship in the context of word of mouth. The assumption is that online word of mouth makes the understanding of agrotourism more popular, so the aim of this paper is to examine whether the "popularity" of agrotourism has grown on the Internet during past years during which the Internet has recorded exceptional growth. According to that, this paper examines the distributions of using similar keywords with the same meaning - agritourism and agrotourism - during last four years (from June 2007 to June 2011) by use of Google alert and the word agroturizam which is the translation of these words in the Croatian language. Google alert was used as a monitoring tool. The paper analyzes the appearances of these three keywords monthly and daily on Google and additionally analyzes their use on Facebook as the most popular social group nowadays.

Keywords: agritourism, agrotourism, agroturizam, Internet, word of mouth, Croatia

PRODUŽENI SAŽETAK

U znanstvenoj literaturi postoji sve više istraživanja koja govore o sve većem utjecaju interneta u oglašavanju i prodaji. Agroturizam ima sve značajniju ulogu u globalnoj turističkoj „industriji", ali do sada ima relativno malo istraživanja, ili ih uopće nema, a koja su istražila utjecaj marketinga „od usta do usta" ili „word of mouth marketing" u slučaju agroturizma. Istraživanje prezentirano u radu pretpostavilo je da online marketing „od usta do usta" čini agroturizam sve popularnijim i cilj rada je bio istražiti, je li popularnost agroturizma značajnije porasla s obzirom na iznimnu popularnost i sve veću dostupnost interneta. Sukladno tome, u radu je dan prikaz pojavljivanja riječi agrotourism i agritourism u posljednje četiri godine, od lipnja 2007. do lipnja 2011. godine, te riječi agroturizam od ožujka 2009. do lipnja 2011. na Google upozorenju. Google je pri tome korišten kao alat za monitoring budući je to najviše korištena ili među najčešće korištenim svjetskim tražilicama. U radu je dan prikaz pojavljivanja ove tri riječi u okviru ukupnog mjesečnog pojavljivanja i prema broju pojavljivanja u danu. Dodatno je analizirano i pojavljivanje ovih riječi na Facebook-u, kao trenutno najpopularnijoj društvenoj mreži. U radu je također dan pregled literature i istraživanja veznih uz razvoj interneta kao marketinškog instrumenta, definiranja pojma agroturizma kao poslovne aktivnosti u ruralnim područjima, promocije kao marketinškog alata u agroturizmu, ruralnog turizma i

agroturizma na internetu, te ulozi online marketinga „od usta do usta“ u turističkoj promociji. Zaključak rada je da online marketing „od usta do usta“ nije u dovoljnoj mjeri iskorišten u slučaju agroturizma. Smatramo da će uloga online marketinga „od usta do usta“ bit sve veća te da će biti značajnija čak i od tradicionalnog marketinga „od usta do usta“.

Ključne riječi: agritourism, agrotourism, agroturizam, internet, marketing “od usta do usta”, Hrvatska

INTRODUCTION

The characteristics of tourist offers are well known and the many researchers are agreed that the main characteristics of tourist offers, unlike other commodities, are dislocation from supply, heterogeneity, offer inelasticity and seasonality (Moutinho, 2005). Offer in agritourism is the offer of a destination because the customers of agrotourism products usually visit more then one place in a region (Brščić, 2005, Brščić, 2006) and, according to the customer point of view, the product of destination can be defined as “do–it yourself” more so than a finished product (Swarbrooke & Horner, 2001). Because of that, it is assumed that the Internet is important even in promotion and selling of these businesses especially in agrotourism because of the specific characteristics of these households such as: dislocation in distant rural areas and small capacities which is the reason why many households with agrotourism activity works at specific hours and only on pre-arranged visits. According to the survey results of the Institute of Tourism Zagreb (TOMAS, 2007 & 2010) Internet is in third place after recommendation by relatives and friends and media with 30% in 2007. In 2010 the Internet as a source of information for the tourist in Croatia was in fourth place and 27% of the tourists get information about the holiday on the Internet. In the last 13 years the Internet as a source of information, according to TOMAS’ survey on tourists in Croatia (TOMAS, 2010), which is conducted in summer time every three years since 1997, indicate an increased trend of Internet users for getting information about a destination, from 2% in 1997 to 30% in 2007 as the highest result. Similarly was been noted by the European Travel Commission (ETC, 2006) which also records a trend of increased use of the Internet for information about the destination. Experienced tourists more and more book their own parts of their travels and tourists also mention that web pages need to offer more detailed and updated information (TOMAS, 2007). The same results were obtained at the regional level of Croatia (collected in Istria County) Institute of Agriculture and Tourism Poreč (IPTPO, 2008) pointing out that Internet as a source of information is in second place (21%) after recommendation by agencies (39%) (Ružić, Dropulić & Matošević, 2008). There has been strong focus on tourists’ perspective in these researches and all the above points to the importance of the Internet as a tool for gathering information, especially for tourists, but, however, with little inspection of those who want to provide information in tourism. Galloway et al. (2011) took into account both sides in a study of Internet portals in rural Scotland and finds from both that “greater importance is placed on maintaining local interests to facilitate local trade then fostering external market orientation”. Promotion of agrotourism on the Internet is an interesting but still partially ignored research field, but in this work we put the focus on the relationship between use of the Internet and agri/agrotourism terminology and the basic research questions are; what is the difference in use of the terms agritourism, agrotourism and

agroturizam? How popular is agri/agrotourism on social networks? Has online word of mouth about agri/agrotourism increased during the past years of Internet exceptional growth?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Internet is not only the marketing channel but also the business platform and promotion on the Internet is, in general, cost effective (Law, Leung & Buhalis 2009). Since it was commercialized, the Internet has brought new benefits to marketing by greater capabilities for the distribution of information and media to a global market (Fagerstrøm & Ghinea, 2010). Generally Internet provides the interaction between two or more users and access to a wide variety of sources (government agencies, businesses, universities and individuals) and at the end reduced costs and economic interaction and improved communication with customers (Duarte & Pais, 2010). Researchers agree that the Internet has provided people with opportunities for social activities opening up entirely new features of social reality. In tourism virtual communities can be used to enhance their existing travel products and to create new divisions and capabilities (Kim, Lee & Hiemstra, 2004; Wang, Yu & Fesenmaier 2002). Through the Internet, organizations as well as individuals can make their opinions, reactions and personal thoughts known to the global community of Internet users, so word of mouth (WOM) is being given new significance (Dellarocas, 2003). Online WOM, compared to traditional WOM, is more influential due to its speed, convenience, one-to-many reach, and its absence of face-to-face human pressure (Phelps et al., 2004). Online WOM (or electronic Word of Mouth, or Word of Mouse) usually involves personal experiences and an opinion transmitted through the written word which is an advantage because people can seek information at their own pace (Sun et al. 2006) and the advantages of online WOM or Word of Mouse have attracted the attention and been studied in the last years by both researchers and practitioners (Bickart & Schindler 2001; Brown, Broderick & Lee 2007; Dwyer 2007, Xia & Bechwati, 2008). Word of Mouse is en endless channel of communication with a potentially unlimited number of users (Ünsal, 2009), or more accurately the number of users is growing every day. On line WOM has been shown to have a significant impact on consumer choice and is similar to WOM; some researchers have shown that online or e-WOM may have higher credibility, empathy and relevance to customers than market-created sources of information on the Web (Bickart & Schindler, 2001; Gruen, Osmonbekov & Czaplewski 2006). Gelb and Sundaram (2002) summarises that Word of Mouse is more likely, compared to its traditional counterpart, to come from people with strong opinions; from people unknown to those who ask for information or opinions, which means that negative opinions are more likely to be offered; to provide confidentiality to those who seek advice; to offer the authority of the written word in the answers. The same authors also explain that Word of Mouse may be less tailored to a potential buyer, since the buyer is unknown to the opinion-giver.

Since it was commercialized in 1997, the Internet has brought new benefits to marketing but the real changes and benefits of Internet marketing have brought “Web 2.0”. The term "Web 2.0" was introduced for the first time in 2004 and the Web 2.0 is used to describe changing trends in the use of technology in which the Internet is used in an interactive and social way to engage consumers (O'Reilly, 2007; Fagerstrøm & Ghinea, 2010).

Due to the rise of Web 2.0 technologies, a new source of information becomes increasingly important for the customer purchase decision-making process because with the rise of Web 2.0 applications such as online forums, boards, list servers, chat rooms, news groups and blogs, a consumer can rely on a new tool with the ability to share their knowledge, experience and opinions (Ünsal, 2009). If Netscape was the standard bearer for Web 1.0, Google is the standard bearer for Web 2.0 (O'Reilly, 2007).

Social media on the Internet are free Web applications (services) that enable users to create self-presentation and the creation of the followers or interactive communication (friends), with one or more communication channel (Ružić & Biloš, 2010). Social networking sites on a personality-base allow each member to create a profile description which can be linked to the profiles of colleagues and friends, in this way forming a network. Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn have become significant personality-based networks (Fagerstrøm & Ghinea, 2010). Social networking sites can be an effective way to reach stakeholder groups and the results of the study of Waters et al. (2009) show that non-profit organizations are beginning to experiment with different Facebook offerings and that they will need to begin using more social networking applications to meet the growing needs and expectations of their stakeholders. Owyang, Tran and Webber (2010) in their report point out: set community expectations; provide cohesive branding; be up to date; live authenticity; participate in dialog; enable peer-to-peer interactions; foster advocacy; and solicit a call to action, as eight success criteria for Facebook page marketing.

Agrotourism as a business opportunity in rural areas

Tourism can have an important role in helping to revitalize rural areas. Many researchers agree that agrotourism can help family farms to earn additional income from tourism activities on their farms (Dernoi, 1983; Bubsby & Rendle, 2000; Akpinar et al. 2005). The words agritourism or agrotourism consist of two parts, prefix agri- or agro- and the word tourism. Combining of agri- or agro- and the noun tourism formed a new word agritourism or agrotourism, which assumes tourist activity designed to involve visitors in agricultural activity or to recreate in an agricultural environment. The term agri- is taken from the “ager” (agri –gen. – latin) which means field, arable land and the term agro-coming from Greek word “agros”- which means soil, land (Sznajder, Prezbórska & Scrimgeour, 2009). Philip, Hunter and Blackstock (2009) suggests five different types of agritourism according to tourist activity on a working farm, according to the nature of tourists’ contact with agricultural activity and whether the tourist experiences authentic agricultural activity. Akpinar et al. (2005) summarises the advantages of agrotourism as follows: a) agrotourism can help to protect the agricultural areas, cultivation lands and rural landscape, b) creates diversity in agricultural pattern and job opportunities in rural areas, c) provides opportunities for marketing the agricultural products, d) increases welfare level of local people, e) establishes social and economic relations between urban and rural dwellers, f) provides a bridge between rural and urban areas, g) meets the tourism and recreation needs of urban people, h) raises the respectability of agricultural activity from the urban peoples’ point of views, i) introducing agricultural activities to urban people is a way to educate urban people in the sense of contribution of agriculture to quality of life and economy. Taking into account the bright side of agrotourism, it can be said that agrotourism is an opportunity to revitalise a rural area and it brings great benefits for local residents.

Promotion as a marketing tool in agrotourism

As previously mentioned promotion plays a significant role in agrotourism business. Promotion is the process of communication between a consumer and a business entity in order to create positive attitudes about products and services and thus persuade consumers to buy a particular product or service. Promotion in tourism (Senečić, 1998) and consequently agrotourism includes activities aimed at attracting tourists (visitors) to a certain area, a destination that would encourage them to buy products and services in the tourist destination and on travel. The promotion consists of various forms of communication with potential buyers. Internet promotion has many advantages compared to traditional advertising media (newspapers, television, radio and other printed materials). The most important is interactivity with the consumer (Ružić, 2000) and Web 2.0 applications are very important in the travel and tourism industry due to the fact that tourists now use the Internet in all phases of travel planning and the ongoing journey (Ružić & Biloš, 2010).

Some researches have shown that WOM has the most important role in promotion of these business activities. In the research of Reynolds (2007) WOM was by far the single-most frequently cited outlet, with 79.2% of visitors having heard about the agrotourism sites they had visited through personal references, but agrotourism websites were reported by just one respondent, representing 0.8% of the responses to this question. These findings are consistent with research conducted in New York State (Hilchey & Kuehn 2002), which reports that WOM advertising is the most effective for the agrotourism marketing. According to Brščić's (2005) research in Croatia WOM takes 43% and most of the visitors heard about agrotourism through this promotion tool and 13% of them were informed about agrotourism by websites. With regard to the importance of using the Internet this is generalized for all business segments. This paper explores its importance in the field of agri/agrotourism. This paper shows the actual state of the popularity of agri/agrotourism on the Internet in order to determine whether the increase of Internet users is growing and the importance of agrotourism among the users.

Rural tourism and agrotourism on the Internet

Agrotourism is one form of rural tourism (OECD, 1994) but in many countries, as well as Croatia, these two terms overlap in the perception of users of these two tourist products. The Internet has a very important role in agrotourism because of the dislocation of agrotourism in distant rural areas and small capacities, which is the reason why many of them limit their working hours and their sale offer is based only on pre-arranged visits. There is a theoretical and empirical shortage of literature about the promotion of agrotourism on the Internet, about the quality of the online channel or the quality of the promotional strategies, as used by operators working in the field of agrotourism. Existing literature leads to contradictions because some of the researchers point out how web sites in rural tourism are very important and they highlight the need for a "deeper" study in this field to enhance promotional activities. Duarte and Pais (2010) in their research point out that website update should be a major concern for rural tourism and that customers need to see changes in the content of a website, otherwise they would gradually decrease their visit rate and in the end give up on visiting the website. They also find out that some observed websites have very long periods (one year or more) without any changes. The same

also point out that to create virtual tours, which is very interesting for potential visitors, some easy-to-use tools are available online for free and do not require great resources or learning efforts. On the other hand, Galloway et al. (2011) findings suggest that "the Internet is useful and necessary to firms in rural locations for reasons other than accessing the extended economy and indeed, that the facility to afford growth via extended markets is substantially less important to rural firms then theory would have us deduce".

Increasingly, ICTs (Information and Communications Technology) play a critical role for the competitiveness of tourism organizations and destinations as well as for the entire industry as a whole (UNWTO, 2001). The developments of search engines, carrying capacity and speed of networks have influenced the number of travellers around the world that use technologies for planning and experiencing their travels. A well-informed consumer is able to take advantage of special offers and reduced prices and they can better explore the region and find products and services that meet his/her needs. Customers are dynamic targets at which marketers can aim promotional messages using the flexibility of the Internet (Buhalis & Law 2008). Tourism organizations, especially businesses, must develop effective methods that can assist practitioners to evaluate their website performance and subsequent online marketing effectiveness (Plaza, 2010). In tourism, Web 2.0 is also referred to as "Travel 2.0" and includes a range of new technological applications like: media and content syndication, mash-ups, AJAX, tagging, wikis, web forums and message boards, customer ratings and evaluation systems, virtual worlds (e.g., Second Life), podcasting, blogs, and online videos (vlogs) (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010).

The role of online word of mouth in tourism promotion

Generally, interpersonal communications have long been recognized as influential in the tourism industry, which is very dependent on human resources who are key factors in tourism product selling. The basic tourism product is *travel* and people want to read and talk about it. Also travel opinion leaders are delighted for opportunities to share their own experiences with others. We are witnessing a rapid growth of Internet technology and its users, which affects the accelerated process of communication, especially of informal ones. Even more than two decades ago (Westbrook (1987) cited by Litvin et all. (2008)) online word of mouth was defined as all informal communications directed at consumers thought Internet – based technology related to the usage or characteristics of particular goods and services, or their sellers. Furthermore, Litvin et all (2008) in their work on this topic, highlights that online WOM "can create virtual relationships and communities with influence far beyond the readers and producers of WOM; it actually creates a new type of reality by influencing readers during their online information searches". According to them, the role of online word of mouth in tourism promotions can be classified into two major categories: 1) informational and 2) revenue generating. In this paper the focus is on the informational segment of online WOM. Although the authors point out specific strategies for managing online WOM in hospitality and tourism (email, websites, blogs and virtual communities, newsgroups, chat rooms, product review sites etc.) which are focused on harvesting information about the property and destination, enhancing visitor satisfaction through product improvement, solving visitor problems, visitors feedback about their experiences, analyzing competitive strategies and monitoring company reputation (Litvin et all. 2008). In this paper, we

are ourselves limited on possible (any) increases of online communications among newsgroups in one segment of the tourism business, which is analyzed in further text.

METHODOLOGY

Researchers, as a research method, usually use questionnaires (or surveys) or they interview the people if they want to get feedback or information about a specific problem. This paper is not focused on the perceptions or attitudes of those who are providing or receiving information about agri/agrotourism offers, but its focus is on monitoring of the agri/agrotourism context on the Internet. For that reason we set the Google alert for the words "agritourism" and "agrotourism" from June 2007 to June 2011 with the aim to follow what people said and write about it and from March 2009 to June 2011, also, for the term "agroturizam" which is a translation of the mentioned terms in the Croatian language. In the Croatian language this term can be used only for marketing purposes because the official translation in the Croatian language can be explained as "tourism on family farms". This is a short conclusion of the First Croatian Congress on Rural Tourism (Hvar, October 2007) "Perspectives of Rural Tourism" with international participation, but in the practice this is the most used term. In Croatia, agrotourism is a relatively new form of business activity and according to the Croatian Chamber of Economy (HGK) in 2007 there were 352 agrotourism businesses registered. As a business activity, agrotourism made great progress in the last few years in Croatia so we found it interesting to observe its use by online WOM. Google alert is a method of counting word occurrences and in this paper is used as a monitoring tool. According to the focus on the importance of online word of mouth for agri/agrotourism and agroturizam in this work, we additionally analyzed Facebook groups with the key words agritourism, agrotourism and agroturizam to find out if agri/agrotourism is "popular" on social networks among its users. Descriptive statistics were used for the data analysis.

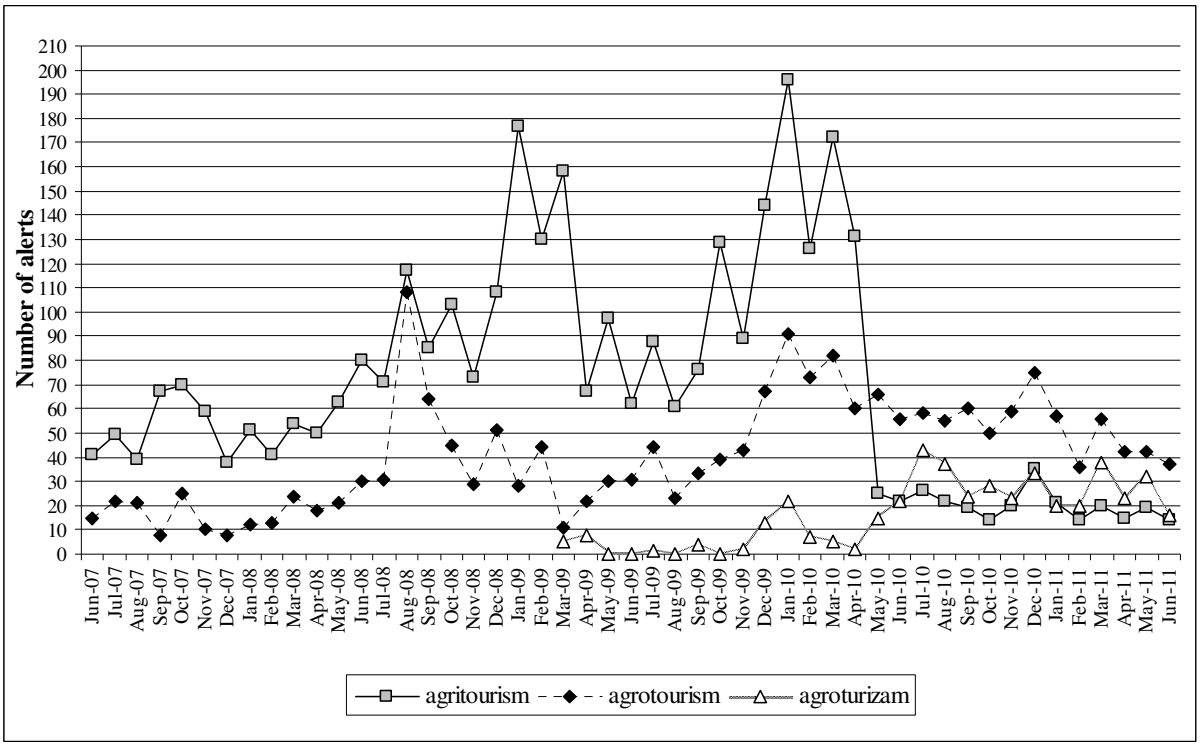
RESULTS

This research is based on data obtained by Google alert which are analysed and presented in tables below. According to the aims of this work, the results are divided into two parts; 1) sum, number of days and number of alerts of key words agrotourism, agritourism and agroturizam on Google, 2) sum of groups and events on Facebook according to terms agrotourism, agritourism and agroturizam.

According to obtained data during the study period the word agritourism appeared on the Google alert an overall total of 3,448 times in 776 days with a maximum number of 61 alerts per day. The word agrotourism appeared on the Google alert overall a total of 2,025 times in 837 days with a maximum number of alerts of 34 per day and since March 2009 a total of 443 times in 305 days with a maximum number of 8 alerts per day for the word agroturizam.

Figure 1. Sum of Google alerts per month from June 2007 to June 2011

Slika 1. Suma Google upozorenja u mjesecu od lipnja 2007. do lipnja 2011.



According to the obtained data, until May 2010, the word agritourism was more popular then the word agrotourism. After that the trend changes and the term agrotourism become more popular on the Internet. Results in the period from 2007 to 2011 indicate that the number of activities on the Internet increased during August, September and October and during December, January and February. It can be assumed that the reason for that is the travelling season time in agrotourism and that after the visit visitors have the desire to share on the Internet their thoughts and thinking with others. This trend can also be associated with maintenance of certain events in the agrotourism sector. The word agroturizam is also more and more used and since June 2010 it is used more then the word agritourism.

Further analysis divided the sum of Google alerts per month on: number of days (figure 2) and the maximum number of alerts per day in a particular month (figure 3).

Figure 2. Total number of days of Google alerts per month from June 2007 to June 2011
Slika 2. Ukupan broj dana s Google upozorenjima u mjesecu od lipnja 2007. do lipnja 2011.

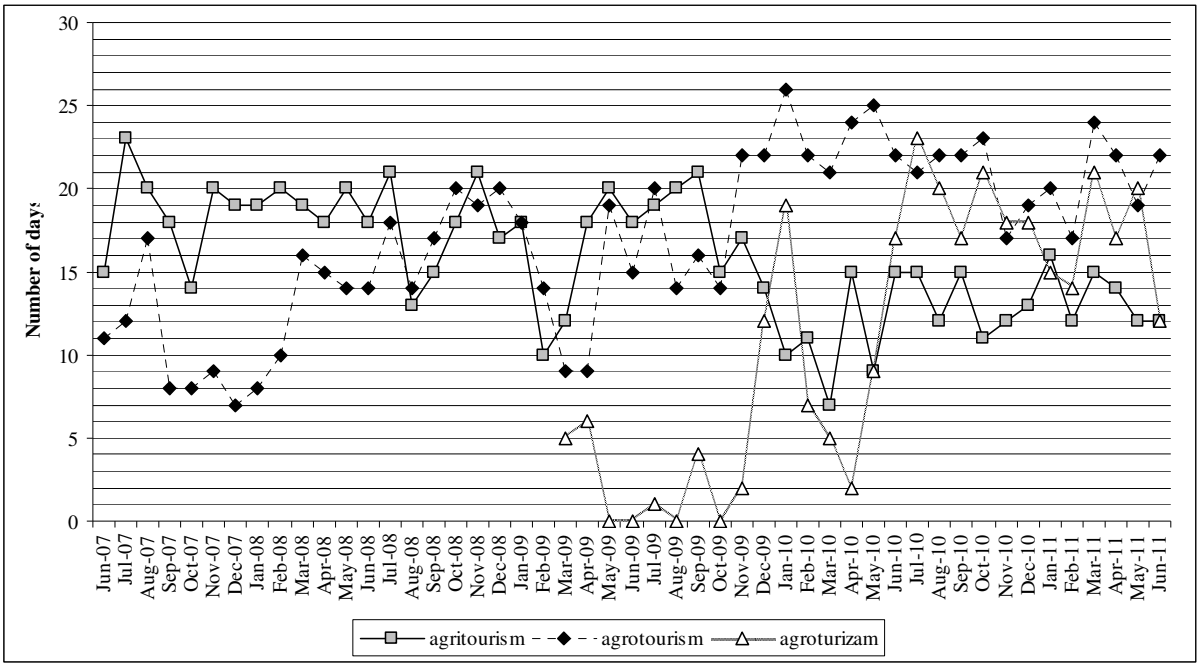
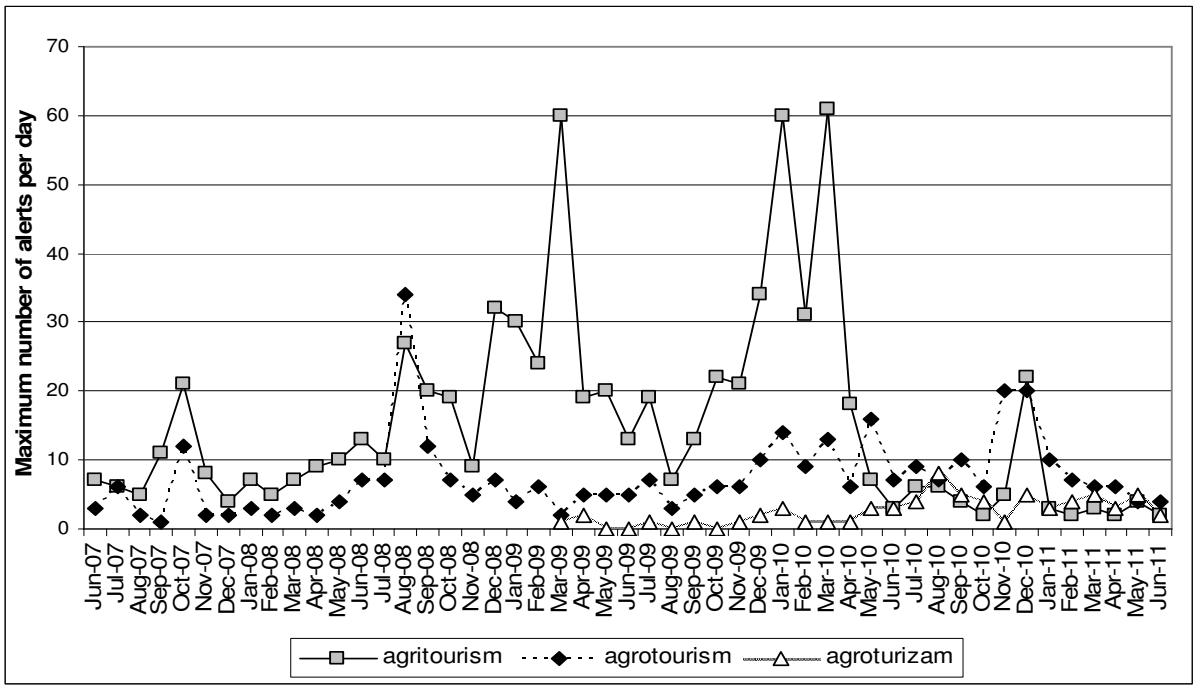


Figure 2 indicates that the word agritourism was more popular in 2007 and, by mid-2008, unlike the word agrotourism which is more popular in the end of 2008 and continually to December 2009 when this word was used on 26 days in the month, so we can say it was the most often used in the four year period**.** In general, we can conclude that the use of both words per month and per day record oscillations during the four year period and it seems that the word agritourism is less popular during this time as opposed to the word agrotourism. The popularity of the word agroturizam is growing and it appeared on Google in June 2011 twice as many days then the beginning of recording in March of 2009.

Figure 3. The maximum number of alerts per day in particular months from June 2007 to June 2011 of agritourism and agrotourism, and from March 2009 to June 2011 for agroturizam

Slika 3. Maksimalan broj upozorenja u danu u pojedinom mjesecu od lipnja 2007. do lipnja 2011, za agritourism i agrotourism te od ožujka 2009. do lipnja 2011.



According to figure 3 there are significant differences of appearances per day in particular months during the past four years. This applies especially for the word agritourism which records an increased number of appearances on the Internet in March 2009, January 2010 and March 2010. These are associated with some events for which the notice of the particular event occurs repeatedly, from different sources. Appearances in a day for the word agrotourism and agroturizam were more equable.

In further text (table 1) is an overview of key words: agri/agrotourism in the period of four years and also for the word agroturizam for a period of three years.

Table 1. The number of key words agritourism and agrotourism which appeared on the Google alert since June 2007 to June 2011 and agroturizam form March 2009 to June 2011

Tablica 1. Broj ključnih riječi agritourism i agrotourism koji se pojavio na Google upozorenjima od lipnja 2007. do lipnja 2011. i riječi agroturizam od ožujka 2009. do lipnja 2011.

	Agritourism		**Agrotourism**		**Agroturizam**	
	Number of days per month	Number of alerts per day	Number of days per month	Number of alerts per day	Number of days per month	Number of alerts per day
Max	23	61	26	34	23	8
Average	15.9	15.4	17.1	7.3	10.9	2.5
Median	15	10	18	6	12.2	2
Standard deviation	3.7	14.7	5.1	5.8	8.0	2.0
Skewness	-0.3	1.8	-0.4	2.5	-0.1	0.8

From table 1 can be seen that the appearance of the words agritourism, agrotourism and agroturizam are average and similar to the figures and it can be seen that the most oscillation was with the word agritourism. The word agritourism appears on average more times in a day (15 on average as opposed to 7 for agrotourism and 2 for agroturizam). The word agrotourism appears more days in a month (17 in average as against 16 for agritourism and 11 for agroturizam).

Use of terms agritourism, agrotourism and agroturizam on Facebook

The Internet offers various opportunities for promotions and for those who sell and buy agrotourism products and it is important to “be in trend”. According to that, we have to highlight Facebook as the most popular social network. It plays an important role in online WOM because it was interesting to see how many groups on the Internet that have in their name the terms agritourism or agrotourism or agroturizam. At 30th of June 2011 there were 96 groups on Facebook with the agritourism term in their name without any event and 56 groups with the term agrotourism in their name and with 4 events. In the Croatian language there were only 7 groups with the term agroturizam. At 6th of February 2012 on the Facebook were 56 groups with the term agritourism and 40 pages, 61 groups and 29 pages with the term agrotourism, and 10 groups and 10 pages with the term agroturizam. We can therefore conclude that according to the possibilities of social networking and the number of agri/agrotourisms worldwide and also in Croatia this social network was not sufficiently used for online WOM.

CONCLUSION

This paper analyzed the use of the terms agritourism and agrotourism, as well as the Croatian word agroturizam, by using Google alert as a monitoring tool. These terms have the same meaning, so the purpose of this work was to explore oscillations in their use by online word of mouth. In the last four years, we have checked hundreds of web pages, which are periodically repeated. These are the result of changes in the web sites or announcements of a particular social event or

similar, or a specific comment or thinking of individual visitors or tourists. In most cases the role of the website as an active participant in online word of mouth was not used. The role of the Internet sites of agrotourism businesses, individual agencies or tourism associations are to make an attractive and informative site (media) to potential guests, but also to offer an opportunity to share the opinions of their visitors using Web 2.0, which is not used in sufficient measure, just in terms of promotion of specific business entities. In Croatia, the Web 2.0 applications and social media are rarely used in the advertising of agrotourism offers. We expect that online WOM will be the most popular way or method of finding costumers, so it will be very useful for agrotourism businesses to make more use of this opportunity.

The contribution of this paper is in its indicative character which points out the importance of agri/agrotourism on the Internet and this paper forms the basis for further research into the role of online WOM. In another words, these results warn that it should not generalize the importance of the Internet for all business segments. There is no question that online WOM is important for the development of agrotourism. The conclusion that emerges from this paper is that online WOM cannot be ignored, even more so because it will have a more important role than traditional WOM in the future.

Limitations and recommendations for further research

We used Google alerts as a monitoring tool and got results which could be very useful for all stakeholders of agrotourism activities as well as those dealing with the unfolding of scientific thought about agri/agrotourism and its popularization. However, this study has limitations that should be taken into account in order to avoid generalizing its results. The data obtained by Google alerts was repeated and they were the main limitations of this research. Also, the small number of groups with the term agri/agrotourism in their name existing on Facebook does not necessarily reflect a lack of online WOM about agri/agrotourism. Maybe topics related to the term agri/agrotourism are treated in other kinds of Facebook pages, for instance in those about “rural tourism”, “wine” “gastronomy”, “traditions”. The above should serve as guidelines for future research in the field of online promotions in agrotourism and it would be necessary to explore: 1) the context of using the terms of agri/agrotourism and agroturizam, 2) the profiles of social network users focused on agri/agrotourism topics, 3) the importance of online word of mouth for agri/agrotourism in comparison with traditional word of mouth, 4) the strategies of online word of mouth in an agri/agrotourism context.

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