

Web 2.0 and customer involvement in new service development

NEW SERVICE DEVELOPMENT IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

Due to the fierce competition in the tourism sector and higher standards demanded, it is not longer sufficient to know only the wants and needs of tourists. New service development (NSD) is of utmost importance and the customer should play an active role in as much stages of the NSD process as possible, providing useful information. Involving customer in the NSD process helps the industry to better understand its customer, to better analyze the market development and to prevent the introduction of products and services, which are not needed.

CUSTOMER INVOLVEMENT

Customer involvement in the NSD process enables the company to have a closer relationship to its customers, helps the brand when it comes to public relations and improves the general analysis of the market. It is also said that the ideas for products are more creative and the later acceptance of the product in the market and of the consumers is higher. On the contrary, there are also some disadvantages to be considered. Consumers are likely to focus mainly on their current needs. Consequently, it is possible that by the time a new product is introduced, the needs and wants of the customer have already changed. Furthermore it is difficult for customers to imagine what is technologically possible, which reduces the originality of the products and limits the outcome.

NEW POSSIBILITIES FOR CUSTOMER INVOLVEMENT IN NSD BY WEB 2.0

Web 2.0 opens new possibilities for customer involvement at any stages of the NSD process and consists mainly of customer intelligence and social networks. With this method leading users of online platforms or online communities are chosen in order to participate in the processes of idea development, screening and product and service evaluations. The advantage of integrating leading bloggers and users is that they possess a good reputation in the online community and have valuable distribution channels. Products and services can be evaluated and directly spread through online social communities, what stimulates other users to write and comment even more. On the other hand also a few risks have to be taken into account. The posts and comments can be seen or even worse manipulated by the competitors and lead to a false outcome. Furthermore the customer sample might be biased and not impartial.

SOURCES & ARTICLES WORTH READING

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