

The lobbying in tourism tourism essay



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In all big business – making projects there have always been rigging and bonds. In the past it used to be called bribery and now days, due to its improved form and sophisticated way it is done, it is said to be lobbying. Who are the lobbyists in tourism? How can they advantage from favouring certain group of people and certain destinations? Is it the matter of well done lobbying the promotion of a certain destination? Lobbying and marketing – how are these actually connected? Is it up to the lobbyists that some good values have lost their importance? To what extent have the Internet and mass media influenced the style and awareness formation of the certain destination and is it also a kind of lobbying? To what extent is lobbying good for some people, destinations and projects and what is the role of the civil sector in such processes? These are just some of questions necessary to be resolved in order to get acquainted with the occurrence more and more present in modern travel industry. It is all about huge amounts of money and because of this tourism will become (even more) interesting to the lobbyists. Very often people wonder how it could be that certain projects are completed on time and how only the certain group of people takes a part in these? Many of these people were not supposed to deal with such projects, many of these companies did not have the best offer; yet they managed to participate in the projects. How it is possible for an individual to make just a few steps and suddenly to become an important participant? Lobbying is one of the best possible answers. It is well featured in business where it is everything about the large sum of money as well as where the great national and social interest is concerned. Who the lobbyists are- in some cases it is known who they are, while in some others they are like some secret

societies, pretty mysterious. It is the second half of the twentieth century when lobbying in tourism started to bloom. It was the moment when the mass tourism flourished along with the great number of receptive objects built and numerous tourism fairs held-all these were/are a fantastic medium for the lobbyists to expand their influence. Many high school and college principals as well as hotel/motel and tourist organisation managers are also involved in the process of lobbying- there are interests everywhere- not necessarily financial, why some things are done in such way and why certain people do these.

The notion “ lobbying” comes from the English word “ lobby” which denotes “ the area that is just inside a large building, where people can meet and wait “. In this space members of the British Parliament used to negotiate, make some arrangements and exchange the information. That is how the notion of lobbying was formed (to try to influence a politician or the government to do or not to do something). In both British and American system of government it is incorporated organization dealing with legislative processes in such way as to represent industrial . and other interests[1].

In case of tourism, the usual lobbyists are the governments of some countries as well as those who want something to be done as they like it and in order to gain some profit. Very often ordinary people are not acquainted with this, due to well skilled professionals. Supremacy and domination are important parts in all spheres of life and lobbying as such is fine means to achieve this.

1. LOBBYING IN SERBIA

In Serbia, lobbying will no longer be operated in a secret way and away from the public eye; on the contrary, it will be an occupation in which franchised professionals will be involved. In July, 2009, there was the proposition of The Lobbying Law created, so that lobbying could become an occupation as any other. According to this law, there will be unique Professional Lobbyist Register Office to deal with the rules of lobbying and to control those who operate opposite the way it is predicted. In such Bill it is said that lobbying is the way for the interested party to achieve impact on some participants in both judicial power and legislation, so as such regulations do no harm on the interested parties or they can benefit from them. The impact has to be explained in full details and at the same time truthful, useful and meaningful and at the same time it should do no harm on other participants by the time it is put into practice. Lobbying involves all the activities done with purpose to influence decision making within public authorities. The purpose of such law is to make lobbying process public and transparent, to make it available to be easily controlled by the executive and legislative authorities and prevent lobbying to act in the way opposite the legal regulations. (The draft of the Lobbying Law outline). In this law it is also mentioned that a lobbyist is a natural person or an entity and lobbying is an activity with purpose to achieve some influence on the processes within the executive and legislative authorities. It would be necessary for all those who want to do this job to have a licence, the written document, obtained from the Lobbyist Board. Furthermore, this law states who can be a lobbyist and even something more important—who are those having no rights to do such activity, and they are: officials, members of State Budget Agency, members of the official managing

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and supervising boards i. e. all those whose activity may cause conflict of interests. Lobbyist activity is available to the public according to the law, although certain pieces of information are confidential as to protect clients and their privacy.

Up to the moment when the law is passed, lobbying is an activity done by the influential people who are amateurs only according to their education and can not get the licence; they are businessmen having chief influence on decision making and profit sharing.

2. LOBBYING AND TOURISM

In case of tourism, lobbying can be considered to be any communications made by employees in the tourism industry, firstly with the potential clients as the way he checks his lobbying skills – namely, if he is a good “ lobbyist”, he can turn a potential client into the client and succeed in taking his Leisure time and money and provide certain services for him. The contact and the invisible services presentation to the client is one kind of lobbying as well as that involves certain skills. Zoran Ivanovic, a professor at the Faculty of Management in Tourism and Hospitality in Opatija mentioned, at he Congress of the Hotel and Tourism Management, held in Opatija in 2008 that what matters is the ‘ essential skills and competences, rather than knowledge’. This thought is actually a definition of well done lobbying. It is necessary to improve knowledge continuously and keep working on it. Those possessing a kind of passive knowledge can possibly be lost in a wide range of scientific knowledge. Skills and competencies are taught and and it is their ongoing practice and improvement that can lead to the results, no matter

what activities we consider – negotiations, lobbying, or when we simply want to leave a good impression.

Competencies[2]and skills[3]and lobbying are essential for tourism. Tourism, defined as moving of people from their place of residence to another with a lot of money spent there, is actually an industry selling its services without to be checked previously. All these so called activities, being not previously checked must be sold and must be properly displayed in order to be purchased. It is claimed that one or even more tourist seasons largely depend on lobbyists – it can be so due to the fact that the lobbyists are those who often create trends and images and they are exactly the ones who do the promotion – trends actually depend on them, they are those who people believe in or vice versa. One of the most important skills of lobbyists and people working in tourism is the rhetoric. Is one of the seven antique, ancient skills and indicates the way communication is accomplished and the information transmitted. Unfortunately, students at the Faculties of Tourism in Serbia do not have a chance to acquaint with this, but it is essential for this profession. It is important for the lobbyists because they have to know how to state what they want to and how, by using the smallest possible numbers of words announce anything. It can be said that lobbying is an officially new skill in Serbia but it is sure that it used to exist in tourism and some other industries a long time ago and that lobbyist used to be well paid for the job done. So far lobbying in Serbia has been concerned to mean bribery and corruption, but in some other the EU countries management contracts and awards for the completed projects are not the news. It is

exactly what Serbia attains to. To award someone means that you honour hiser work and merit for certain things.

Lobbying can make some tourist destinations become staple, it can have to do with sustainable development, it can promote some an idea concerning tourism-all these depend on the one who orders lobbying services. When tourism is taken into consideration, each government should have lobbyists in some of the organizations such as: UNESCO, ICOM, ICOMOS, etc. It will be possible than to present natural beauties and projects related to their protection and those lobbyists should have task to convince the officials there that it is their project that it is most urgent and should be the first financed because it is unique, special and endangered...all these activities have to do with rhetoric, good presentation and good impression the officials get.

3. LOBBYING AS THE CREATIVE INDUSTRY SEGMENT

The concept of creative industry features the description of conceptual and practical merging of creative arts (individual talent) along with cultural industries (mass) and altogether in the context of Informational and Communication Technology that is a part of new economic knowledge that newly created interactive users-consumers can partake.

(Hartley, John ed. 2007: 11)

It can not be a priori claimed that lobbying is a creative industry segment, but the definition part stating that creative industries directly imply to creative arts merging

-out of this it can be concluded that an individual talent can be related to lobbying. One of the greatest talents is rhetoric, previously mentioned but the talent also involves personal image, the communication manners, dress code, style and all the things that have to do with a certain task and is considered to be proper professional and ethic conduct of a lobbyist himself.

One thing is certain when we talk about lobbyists and it is the way they look like and how he wants to achieve his goals. In tourism, it is of core importance the contacts with people not being so well positioned and whose satisfaction dictates the tourist destination and product rating on the market – these people are outgoing and sales managers who according to their impressions transmit the messages to their employees and to the consumers as well.

We can consider that lobbying as an activity can be done at a certain tourist destination and lobbyists would be the tourist guides and reception staff. It is the ability to animate the guests one of the most important in tourism and at the same time can be perceived as lobbying. Well performed and high quality tourist animation can produce satisfied consumers who will by word of mouth communication become the best sales managers for a given destination or a tourist product.

In tourism, lobbying lasts much longer than a tourist arrangement itself-it starts from the moment when a potential customer steps into a travel agent's, tries to decide on the destination product[4], stays at the certain destination and finally shares his feedback, very important for the tourist agent's itself. Even negative feedback is important, because a good manager

is at the same time a good lobbyist and he will do anything to turn such negative experiences into something positive and will not let them have any publicity.

Creativity that can be found in lobbying is widely defined and what matters is the level on which lobbying is done. When we talk about tourist agent's and hotels lobbying can be done by animators and so it will not be necessary for them to have a classic lobbying licence – for them it is necessary to possess talent and ability in order to make the tourists buy something, go on excursions organized by the certain local agent. On larger scales of states, huge markets and destinations it is not only necessary for a lobbyist to have a licence but to have knowledge concerning tourist legality as well. In this case it is essential for a lobbyist to be good at rhetoric and to be well informed and to be in possession of exact items of information. At the same time there is no need for animation and if it happens to occur it should be done in a discrete manner.

4. LOBBYING OR HOW TO PUT IT IN PRACTICE?

It is not easy to be a lobbyist in societies which are xenophobic and used to have totalitarian regime. The idea of democracy is pretty new in the former Yugoslavia area of and it can not be understood that the representation of other people's interests, negotiation and urging do not equal bribery and corruption. That is why it is important that professionals introduce and put lobbying into practice in order that audience gets impression that they are businessmen like any others.

In Serbia, one of the obstacles is that there is no lobbying as a subject at the faculties. At “ VERN” University in Croatia, students at the economic enterprise department have a chance to choose “ The Introduction to Lobbying” as the optional subject. In further course description it is explained that in democratic systems it is not unusual activity for somebody to practice lobbying-on the contrary, it is legitimate means to achieve certain goals and represent the interests. Various legal acts regulate lobbying, and lobbyists have to be incorporated and have to respect the rules and some codes. Lobbyists are those representatives of big companies and business sector, national and local governments, as many other representatives of non-government sector and other interest groups. Due to the fact that lobbying is closely tied with political system, legislation, media and international level, it is the multidisciplinary approach that will be applied on problem solving in this course. “ The Introduction to Lobbying” staff wants to stress the importance of this concept and its practicing in modern political, social and economic life. Even what is more important that we want the student to acquire skills and abilities which will enable him to develop business possibilities. It is this course that will help you to find some answers for the following questions: how to get to the right information and what to do in order to accomplish and protect one’s goals? The students are expected to imagine life situations and by applying what they have learned try to find the best, or the least harmful possible solutions. (www. vern. hr/program/.../Ivancicl-Vodic%20kroz%20kolegij. doc)

Out of this description it can be concluded that lobbying is necessary and at the same time permeates all spheres of industry. As for someone to become

a lobbyist in tourism industry, he/she has to master knowledge from tourism and be well versed in non-verbal communication.

This non-verbal communication is necessary linked with animation and especially in case of tourism. Lobbying is also tightly linked with animation and non verbal communication especially in some tourism spheres. The development of business tourism is one of the important aspects not only in our country, but the worldwide, too. Business clients are educated people who travel round the world visiting different fairs, conferences, symposiums business meetings and many other business activities and protocols so it is of core importance what impression he/she will get of the host country. The business clients are said to represent the country to possible tourists in best way.

According to the latest research conducted by SITE (Society of Incentive and Travel Executives), 76 % of American executive directors claim that business fairs and professional congresses are the main reasons for them to travel, and even 80% of the world's top managers claim that these events are the most important sources of the information they need and possibilities to make new business contracts.

In what way it is important for tourism in a country is best shown on the example of the English town Birmingham, which would have still been an average, industrial town, if there had not been the congress tourism developed. It is the congress tourism that makes profit of approximately £711 million to this town.

Congress presentation has to include all the economic and non-economic services in order to satisfy the needs of the guests here. Such tourist presentation should include tourist attractions, natural beauties, climate, hospitality and cultural heritage. The fact that should be taken into consideration is that congress tourists spend even three times greater sum of money than so-called average tourists. (Yearbook of International Organization, 1980).

In order to satisfy business clients' needs the experiences of some more developed countries should be taken into consideration and some latest trends put into practice. These include some motivating or "incentive" trips which are specially created for the businessman when they are on business trips. These short, but intensive tours are organized for a small number of people and according to their wishes and interests expressed in the questionnaire they had previously filled in and the tours are organized at the most popular locations and include extreme sports adventures and unique parties. It should be a well-known fact that "incentive" business contracts worldwide are worth about a billion dollars.

Such animation of business people is very demanding and not easy at all, because through the short period of time one should make satisfy the needs of already tired guests and then to make them satisfied. It can be very demanding and useful at the same time for the tourist propaganda, and maybe one of the most useful ways of animation because all these people are well educated and experienced, since they have

visited so many countries, and at the moment when they rate the host country well, it means that they will share these positive experiences with people in their home countries and in such way they can become the best possible presenters of the county they stayed in. (Ivkov – Džigurski Anđelić, 2008)

Only these sorts of business trips and such clients can imply to what extent animation is linked with lobbying. Well versed animator is a good lobbyist at the same time knowing how to impose his rhythm and where to take his business clients as they can have a good time. It is up to him and his ability to what extent the clients would be satisfied and be ready to follow him. At the same time, it is his responsibility what feedback the host country would have when the client gets back home. It is no wonder that good animation and lobbying as well can make up for the possible failures. When the business clients are mentioned it is very important that the host county knows what it wants and that it can be accomplished by animators – lobbyists. The quality of the product is of core importance, then services and the ideas, but what are crucial are the lobbyist's experience and his/her non – verbal communication.

INSTEAD OF CONCLUSION

No matter what is going to happen in the future people would always like to travel as they did so from the beginning of the world. Some time in the past migrations used to move towards wealthier spots and because of the search for food. The times when tourism was available only for the aristocracy had passed a long time ago. The era of mass tourism is also vanishing. The

highlights of the present moment are city break tours and tours having enriched thematic content along with various cultural itineraries.

People used to travel where the masses went, but nowadays people travel where their friends recommend, they gather some information on different social forums... Actually, the forums are the best places to lobby for something – it is possible to have someone there in order to opt for a tourist destination. The Internet plays an important part in tourism and in its marketing as well and it can be said that the Internet is an integral part of lobbying, too. The Internet preserves the “ magic and mystique” of the lobbying activity, since you do not know who the lobbyist is but no matter you get involved and up to the extent of his skills you believe him or not. That is how you become a potential customer of his “ invisible” services. The lobbyist is a successful one if he manages to draw your attention and make you not leave the forum, if he provokes you to ask him farther questions which are a good signal for him that he made you think unconsciously about the tourist product. It is a huge success for the lobbyist himself because the forum user will start to spread the story about the good forum and in this way to make a potential destination become a part of tourist propaganda-it is much easier to sell a product or a service when the name is familiar to the potential customers.

It is necessary to answer the following questions:

who

who with

with what

why

how

who to

what for

who for the lobbying is done?

After answering all these questions it would be much easier to train a lobbyist and then he/she would know exactly how to act in order to achieve some goals. Machiavelli once said that “ The goal justifies the means” but ethic code should be obeyed as well. Lobbyists should obey their own ethic code and the one in tourism, so in case of tourism it can not be said that all the goals and aims in the process of lobbying for the certain destination or a tourist product. It is necessary to bear in mind, who is lobbying and whom he is representing and what will be long term results. Lobbying is a process where the results can not be shown immediately, its effect can become visible in a period of couple of years. Continuous evaluation is necessary – both for the lobbyists and tourist destinations, as well. It is necessary to evaluate the results-they actually show what a lobbyist team has managed to do. Team work is the best possible one even in lobbying industry and it does not mean that that two or more people should act simultaneously, but it means that their actions should be coordinated and not to be futile.

Lobbying is a sign of the extent to which a society is democratic and civil sector developed. The region of the Western Balkans is still immature in that sense and along with its evolution the lobbying activities will start to develop and the concept of lobbying will become familiar to them. The lobbyists' task is a promotion and that is why it can not be a priori said that everything is about money – it is very important segment in fact, but its effects can influence economic development of some countries, civil sectors and eventually the promotion of some products and services. Apart from all this, money is important because it can make the society consolidate and influence well balanced financial distribution within all social scales. It is tourism that can help the society and the country to develop and good lobbying can make huge amounts of money to reach the country and later be invested in sustainable development, the promotion of tourism as a very important tertiary sector, young people's grants...

Lobbying makes it possible:

For the Institutions to be easily recognized on the international market and especially among the partners that have already been selected to be within significant institutions in the realm of tourism in Europe and worldwide,

To follow the world trends in tourism and make it possible for the activities to be promoted,

The creation of the international partnership system of the professional associations,

Necessary support in the process of association in the institutional network organisation which have the similar goals and in that way to promote the product.

Lobbying and tourism are closely connected. It is the fact. Maybe it is not said in public. Maybe people have not realized this too seriously so far, but in the years to come their relationship should be taken into more serious consideration. Lobbyists have to do their job, and along with the fact that tourism is becoming a leading industry in the world the lobbying will become more and more present. The students of tourism should bear in mind that they can be the lobbying as their profession although some of them, being members of various student organizations, have already been acquainted with this, though on an amateur level.