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ABSTRACT

The study investigates and analyzes the representation of on-line content emerging from travel blogs as part of a narrative process. To analyze the tourist image and other relevant characteristics revealed from the text of the travel blogs, text mining techniques are used to analyze the blogs corpus. The city of Bucharest is the case study of this research that helps us to examine the characteristics of over 600 travel blogs before and after the integration into the EU. The aim is to provide insights into the image communicated by tourists through their social narrative experience and to bring into the light the produced image of the chosen destination throughout the two respective periods. The research sharpens our understanding about the path of one former communist capital city and the role of tourism and blogging for city production. In doing so, it will broaden the geography of tourism research and it will offer a bridge between the little explored tourism of the capital cities of Central and Eastern Europe and the tourism of other capital cities.

Keywords – *travel blogs, text mining, Bucharest, post-communism, tourism production*

JEL Classification

The role of this research was to understand blogs' contributions to the tourist image formation of the city of Bucharest. Of secondary importance was to offer insights to marketers. The results managed to uncover the Bucharest tourist image as it emerged from posts on *travelpod.com*. Text analysis through semantic network analysis and content analysis produced interesting findings about Bucharest. The city has limited attractiveness to tourists and is used mainly as a hub for more interesting destinations.

Some limits restrained the study. The generalization is based on a single travel site and had to rely only on posts written in English. Because of this a cultural understanding about the created image of bloggers was not possible. Moreover, the number of posts is clearly not related to the proportion of tourists that come from different countries to Bucharest. Further research will need to address these relations in strategic city tourism decisions.

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