INOVATIONS AT MEDICAL TOURISM MARKETING AND TURKEY'S PERCENTAGE OF THE MARKETPLACE

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Abstract - In the growing medical tourism market, Turkey's current situation, assessed challenges and opportunities in the market, has introduced innovative developments. In this context; Turkey's health tourism is made available by content analysis. The aim of the study is; investigating the working and non-working aspects of the automation system of ASK2MED, one of the companies that use different marketing strategies in different conditions in health tourism management. As a result of the research; health tourism market are yet to reach the peak in Turkey, where a large share of the world market, taking potential for the private sector to do more promotional activities and was determined to need the support of foreign investors.

Index Terms - Medical Tourism Marketing, B2B Marketing.

I. INTRODUCTION

In a globalizing world, individuals are seeking not only the resources of their own country but also every available good source for health care. The development of information technologies and the ease of transportation push people to do more research in order to receive health care. Turkey, has become one of the most important actor of the growing medical tourism market with good medicine and good health care.

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAME

Health Tourism in Turkey

Health tourism in the world has developed rapidly in the last 10 years. Only the number of travelers for medical tourism exceeded 10 million and reached an annual turnover of 100 billion USD. Thermal tourism, medical SPA, the number of travelers in elderly and disabled tourism and the turnover in this area are not known exactly, but it is predicted to be higher in medical tourism than in tourism.

Table. 1. Healt Tourism Percentage

YEARS	TOTAL TOURISM INCOME	HEALTH TOURISM INCOME	%
2015	31.464.777	638.622	2,03
2016	22.107.440	715.438	3,23
2017	26.283.565	827.331	3,14
2018	29.512.926	863.307	2,92

Source: www.tuik.gov.tr

Although the percentages in the Table. 1 are around 3%, they are thought to be around 5 times that of informal transactions.

B2B Automation System

Automation; to carry out the works with automatic functioning tools in industry, management and scientific, technical works without human labor.

B2B system (Business to Business) is e-commerce model from firm to firm. In B2B e-commerce model, buyers and sellers meet on the same website. B2B platforms are the e-commerce portals where the products and services that are wanted to sell are displayed online. On these platforms, transactions such as offering quotations, quotations, and offers can be performed. Similarly, buyer firms also have the opportunity to evaluate the prices and offers of the vendors.According to Kotler; although marketing for consumers is more popular, marketing for businesses is related to larger turnovers. Effective marketing from business to business is the driving force sales force. (Kotler, 2003).

III. REASEARCH MODEL

The study was conducted in a qualitative pattern; Holistic single status design is used in case study patterns.

The Universe and the Sampling of the Reasearch

The universe of the research is ASK2MED Health Tourism Facility (health tourism business with B2B automation system) which is uniq in the field. And sampling is the co-founders of the mentioned enterprise.

Data Collection Instruments Used In Research

Indept interview method was used in the study. Company founders were asked open-ended questions.

Data Analysis Method Used In Research
Content analysis was used as data analysis method.

IV. FINDINGS

INTERVIEW

1. What is the purpose of Ask2Med Health Tourism?
"ASK2MED is an online appointment system that enables patients to reach specialist physicians through tourism agencies. Our business can be summarized as providing the fastest and safest access of the patients to the real centers in the developing health tourism network and following the planned treatment organization. In doing so, we have focused on doing this with lower rates of brokerage fees, such as market healthcare brokers, who can, in some cases, make the patient, the doctor, and the tourism agency happy, rather than working with commissions that may be more than the doctor's treatment. At the same time, we aimed that such a system would be used by agencies to expand the product range and create an additional earnings model."

2. What are the economic data to evaluate?
"According to the Ministry of Health data, the number of travelers for medical tourism in the world exceeded 10 million and reached a turnover of 100 billion USD annually. In 2016 the market share in Turkey's health tourism research done with the internet, although not realistic and complete data on this subject which increased by 12% to 700 million dollars; however, when we consider other data, we have estimated that it exceeds $ 1 billion. Over the years, we see that this amount has increased exponentially. As a company, we have a place in this range. We planned to make the health tourism mediation service made through a wide variety of channels to be made more professional and recorded."

3. What do you think of preferred treatment in Turkey?
"As a result of the interviews with the medical institutions and physicians we conducted jointly, the most frequently applied treatments were learned and the most wanted of these treatments in the search engines were identified and included in our system. For example, although there are also sex-change operations in our country, most patients are applied in the same way they search for plantation in Thailand and also in many countries despite the success in ferreting out most in Turkey. We have built our advertising and promotion activities on the most preferred areas in our country where many countries do not meet the treatment of social security and insurance systems. They focused on dental treatments, aesthetic operations, hair transplantation, and eye treatments. In addition, in some countries where the health system is not good, promotion and advertising activities were carried out on cancer treatments and birth operations."

4. What are the advantages and disadvantages of B2B working in Health Tourism?
"First, I would like to briefly explain the B2B system. The ASK2MED B2B system can be summarized as a search engine where can log in with the user password of tourism agencies, not the end users (patients). The agencies can make searches for disease or treatment from the physicians and health institutions that our company has contracted. The patients can take their appointments from the location and the physician they want with the agency's access, and get them from the agency in places such as settlement, transfer, accommodation, and transfer.
In the B2B business style, working with a variety of agencies, can provide you to reach large markets and it is a big advantage. Considering the tourism agencies all over the world, the size of the market can be understood more clearly. As it is also the agency that recommends treatment to the patient, do not need intensive and high budget studies in advertising and promotion activities like B2Cs.Since the automation system is compatible with API integration, it can be easily integrated into the major agency systems, which is our technological advantage.
The need for training of agencies about using the search engines is a disadvantage. Large tourism companies, health and treatment of the subject, because they could not afford the risk of complications, they chose to stay away from the subject, this was our second disadvantage. Our biggest disadvantage is the fact that we are a first in the sector. I think it would be easier for agencies to adapt if we had similar practices to our work system. Currently, most of the patients continue to trade with offline booking and appointment system both in the world and in our country. At the same time, in our interviews with patients and agencies, they say that they want to see a physician rather than an automation system. This is another disadvantage we face in terms of sustainability of the system."

5. Why did you determine Antalya to be the main center of your company while you have many contracs all around Turkey? What are its advantages and disadvantages?
"While Antalya is the capital of tourism, it is a city that can be the capital of health tourism. The patients came together with their families, they can make their holidays in extremely beautiful facilities and they could complete their treatment.
We learned from the patient interviews that, direct flights to Antalya are limited especially in winter months and that patients prefer Istanbul more."

6. What is the range of health tourism mediation service costs in the world and in our country and how does the health tourism company of ASK2MED guarantee the payment of the commissions and taxation?

"Health tourism in India brokerage fees by 20-25%, 30-35% in Thailand, in Turkey vary from 20-60%, but the focusing 30%.

In our company, the total commission fee is 20% and it is shared between the agency and our company. The agency share is collected by the agency as a prepay / service fee at the moment the patient makes the reservation. Thus, the agency guarantees the service cost in advance."

7. Where do you position your B2B system in the future of Health Tourism?

"As in every sector, technology adaptation in the field of health tourism takes time. However, since technology is an indispensable part of life, I think that this discipline will be accepted as a need by adopting it in time.

As similar businesses start to emerge, it is inevitable that such systems will become more widely accepted. Being a pioneer in this field will always keep us one step ahead of our competitors."

V. RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

Health tourism is affected by many parameters and the variables are dynamic; B2B marketing, which proceeds more through individual channels, is a type of marketing that starts with the inherent difficulties of business.

When the findings were evaluated;

The necessity of working with travel agencies (air tickets, hotel reservations etc.),

To be able to use extensive tourism agency networks,

Brokerage fees can be guaranteed ; are the positive contribution to the system;

Individuals (patients) to conduct a health survey, not a tool against them, direct physician requests to see,

Individuals (patients) want to see a direct doctor, not a mediator when researching about health care

Training difficulties of agencies and adaptation difficulties and training costs for new generation applications,

Concern about any potential negativity (complication, etc.) of large firms about health tourism, which may cause major damage to the firm's brand value,

Issues such as the lack of general / private health insurance (aesthetic dental treatments, hair transplantation, other aesthetic treatments), which are the wishes of the applicants, were also considered as the challenges of the system.

Table. 2. SWOT Analysis of ASK2MED

STRENGHTS • Being first in the field, • High quality health service, • Wide agency network, • A network of health institutions - physicians referred by mentors • Preferability by medical institutions and physicians with low commission costs, • The trustworthiness of the Agency's progress payments, • User-friendly interface, • Accommodation, transportation and transfer needs can be met by agencies, agencies prefer to cooperate with the company, • API integration feature, • Corporate brand image.	WEAKNESSES • Being first in the field, • Limited publicity and promotion budget, • The difficulty of adaptation of the agencies to the automation system, • Costs of training of agencies, • Individuals (patients) to conduct a health survey, not a tool against them, direct physician requests to see, • The lack of authority of health terminology of the agencies, • Concern about any potential negativity (complication, etc.) of large firms in the application of health tourism, which may cause major damage to the firm's brand value,
OPPORTUNUTIES • National and international incentives, • Combining holiday and treatment, • Relatively low treatment costs, • Possibility to expand the product range for agencies.	THREATS • All threats affecting tourism, • Terrorist events, • Battle with neighbors, • International crises, • Businesses and individuals engaged in informal health tourism, • Reproductive injury due to possible complications.

Health tourism is sustainable in Turkey, which reached the peak yet been evaluated and advantages will grow well when evaluated with growing health tourism in Turkey.

In the interpretation of SWOT analysis, it was evaluated that B2B systems in health tourism were more cumbersome than B2C (business to consumer) systems; but the height of the reliability and sustainable thanks to the support network of agents was assessed that can grow.

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