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NEUROMARKETING IN TOURISM MANAGEMENT AND EMOTIONAL DETERMINANTS OF DESTINATION STRATEGIES

The contemporary tourism market is becoming increasingly complex and competitive. Traditional marketing approaches, primarily based on demographic or economic data analysis, often prove insufficient for a comprehensive understanding of the motivations and behaviors of modern tourists. In this context, the importance of neuromarketing, an interdisciplinary field combining neuroscience, cognitive psychology, and marketing is steadily growing [1]. Neuromarketing enables the study of both conscious and unconscious consumer reactions, allowing for more effective adaptation of communication, promotion, and destination management strategies.

Understanding tourists' emotions is crucial because travel decisions are frequently irrational and influenced by impulses, imagery, and emotions [2]. The modern tourist seeks not only a service but primarily an experience emotional, engaging, and memorable. Neuromarketing provides tools that enable tourism managers to build deeper and more authentic relationships with audiences by appealing to their emotional and subconscious processes.

Neuromarketing in tourism involves analyzing brain and body reactions to marketing stimuli, such as images, sounds, colors, or scents, using technologies like EEG, eye-tracking, or galvanic skin response (GSR) [1][4]. These tools make it possible to identify which elements of promotional materials evoke the most positive and engaging emotions. In tourism management, neuromarketing has two primary applications. First, in destination branding research, the analysis of emotional

responses helps identify features of a place that elicit feelings of attraction, safety, curiosity, or pleasure. Second, it plays a key role in tourist experience design, that is, creating offers that engage the tourist's senses and emotions at every stage of the journey, from inspiration and planning to the actual visit and post-visit memory formation.

Modern destination management strategies increasingly rely on the concept of emotional branding. Unlike traditional marketing, which focuses mainly on functional benefits, emotional branding emphasizes building a strong emotional bond between the tourist and the place. Neuromarketing provides objective data that help identify which elements of communication generate feelings of attraction, engagement, or inspiration [3][5]. Based on such data, it becomes possible to design promotional materials such as websites, social media campaigns, and promotional videos in line with the principles of visual and emotional perception.

The application of neuromarketing methods also allows researchers and practitioners to test the effectiveness of advertising content through tools such as eye-tracking or EEG, determining which components attract attention and generate positive affect [4]. Moreover, personalization of tourism offers based on users' emotional preferences is becoming increasingly common, enhancing the efficiency of destination marketing campaigns [5].

Despite its significant potential, the implementation of neuromarketing in tourism faces several challenges. The most important among them are ethical concerns. Using knowledge about unconscious emotional reactions of tourists may lead to the manipulation of consumer decisions [3]. Therefore, the development of transparent ethical standards and responsible practices in the application of neuromarketing methods in tourism promotion is essential. Another limitation involves the high cost and limited accessibility of neuromarketing technologies, which confines their use primarily to large-scale research projects and institutions [1][4].

Moreover, interpreting emotional data requires caution, as emotions are complex and strongly influenced by cultural context, age, gender, and individual experiences. Nevertheless, neuromarketing remains a valuable tool supporting management and

communication processes within the tourism industry.

Neuromarketing is becoming one of the most innovative directions in contemporary tourism management. It enables a deeper understanding of the emotional mechanisms underlying travel decision-making and supports the creation of more effective communication strategies. In an era of information overload and intense competition for attention, emotions represent the most durable and authentic link between individuals and tourism brands. The use of neuromarketing can significantly enhance tourism management efficiency, improve tourist experiences, and strengthen the competitiveness of destinations that recognize that at the center of modern tourism marketing stands the human being with emotions, memories, and the desire for experiences.

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