

DEVELOPMENT OF MARKETING STRATEGY FOR THE PROMOTION OF TOURISM ATTRACTIONS

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RAZVOJ MARKETING STRATEGIJE ZA PROMOCIJU TURISTIČKIH ATRAKCIJA



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DEVELOPMENT OF MARKETING STRATEGY FOR THE PROMOTION OF TOURISM ATTRACTIONS

(Razvoj marketing strategije za promociju turističkih atrakcija)

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INTRODUCTION

The basis of long-term and stable tourism development lies in professional destination management (task of local tourism organizations and / or destination management organizations), harmonization of development directions with dynamic requirements of tourism demand, monitoring the trends in the tourism market and adequate marketing activities. and tourist destination attractions.

The region of North Banat, as well as the County of Tamiš have significant natural and cultural resources for tourism development. Unfortunately, the tourist potential of these regions has not yet been valorised in the right way due to the lack of a professional marketing approach, among other things. Tami[County has a significant preserved biodiversity that can be the carrier of tourism development in the future. Through cooperation in the border area of Serbia – Romania, the authorities recognized the importance of these potentials for further joint development of the tourism product.

Accordingly, the goal of this strategy is to improve the image and create a tourist brand of the destination of North Banat and Tamiš County, as well as the promotion of tourism products in the observed area that will accelerate tourism growth based on real market conditions and product portfolio. can count in the coming period.

The preparation of such a document is a complex job, and the authors carried out the following working procedures within the preparation of this part of the project:

- 1. *Desk research* that included the study of previously implemented tourism projects in the region, analysis of various strategic documents, master plans and development plans at the level of municipalities of North Banat and Tamiš County as well as at the level of AP Vojvodina and the Republic of Serbia.
- 2. Field research that included a tour of available tourist resources.
- 3. Interviews with stakeholders (owners and managers of catering facilities and other identified elements of the offer) and representatives of municipal tourism organizations.

Within this document, based on the evaluation of tourist potential and identified attraction structure, tourism products of North Banat and Tamiš County were defined, a portfolio of tourism products was developed, potential tourist target markets were identified, and guidelines for promotional activities were presented.

At the end of the document are the proposals for improving the development of tourism and the action plan. In this context, the marketing strategy has the task of meaningfully connecting the attractions and the products, positioning and presenting North Banat and Tamiš County as a modern, attractive and interesting tourist destination that will attract both domestic and foreign tourists. Improvement of the marketing activities is a necessary condition for increasing the number of guests.

1. STRATEGIC MARKETING OBJECTIVES

The region of North Banat and Tamiš County does not yet have the position and image of a recognizable tourist destination. In order to change perceptions about this region, both nationally and internationally, it is necessary to start strong and well-designed marketing. In that sense, in the first place, there is the need for region positioning and branding, based on the integration of tourism products that can be offered to tourists, thus creating a unique experience.

Positioning of North Banat and Tamiš County is not only creating a brand and visual identity, but based on thoughtful and targeted marketing actions, the region is positioned in the minds of tourists as a destination with a rich offer of tourist content, gastronomic delights, cycling tours, excursions and the like.

It is to be expected, depending on the progress of the development of the tourist offer, i.e. creation of new tourist contents and products, that the initial positioning will change over time and thus follow the evolution of tourism development of AP Vojvodina, the Republic of Serbia and Romania.

Accordingly, one of the goals of marketing activities is the optimization of existing tourism products, but also the development of new ones, all with the aim of increasing the diversity, quality and type of offer that is a prerequisite for tourism development.

Optimization of Creating new tourist Offer promotion existing tourism content products Tracking tourism Creating a brand and visual identity trends

Figure 1. Positioning of North Banat and Tamiš County

Given that there are a large number of tourist destinations in the world that offer attractive tourism products, preserved nature, beautiful cities and diverse experiences, this region must give the potential tourists a reason for them to visit it and to position itself in the minds of tourists by use of marketing tools. The tourist offer of the region is based on the heterogeneity of available tourist resources and attractive locations that are the primary motivators of travel and reflect the attractiveness towards the region of North Banat and Tamiš County.

What North Banat and Tamiš County are recognisable for - and thus the basis for positioning of this region - are the endless plains, unique architectural and cultural-historical heritage, rich and authentic gastronomic offer (traditional specialties of local cuisine: pork greaves, bacon, sausages, kulen (hot flavoured sausages), strudels, pumpkin pies, etc.), preserved natural resources (rivers, canals and lakes, thermal springs, rich flora and fauna, hunting grounds and protected areas), repertoire of local events (some of which have reached regional and even international status), opportunities for sports and recreation, farms adapted to match modern ethno-tourism requirements, as well as a mixture of numerous cultures permeated through the peoples living there (Northern Banat and Tamiš County are areas that unite, in a relatively small area, different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic characteristics).

Rich cultural heritage, restoration and promotion of cultural and historical heritage (castles and summer houses built in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, are part of the cultural identity of different peoples who lived here in the past and are deeply connected with history, culture and

tradition of this region) and old roads, archaeological sites, sources of thermal and thermomineral waters, hunting grounds, developed network of canals and rivers are just some of the untapped opportunities for more developed tourism in this region.

1.1 Marketing activities at the level of the North Banat region and Tamiš County

In order to achieve adequate positioning and branding of the region, a professional approach to managing marketing activities is a prerequisite. These activities should be carried out by tourist organizations and / or destination management organizations (DMOs). Only a professional attitude towards tourism and marketing activities can achieve adequate results in the form of increasing the number of guests, but also improving the image of the destination of North Banat and Tamiš County.

Marketing goals can be defined as follows:

- Promoting North Banat and Tamiš County as a tourist destination on foreign and national markets;
- Multiplying the number of foreign and domestic guests;
- Defining *quick win* products that can be commercialized quickly;
- Establishing and operationalizing a marketing system at the regional level (cooperation of municipal tourism organizations and the establishment of a destination management organization);
- Establishing cooperation between the managers of the tourist destination of North Banat and Tamiš County and tour operators and travel agencies;
- Launching joint marketing campaigns with regional and cross-border partners (Banat in Romania);
- Organizing press trips and study trips for journalists, travel bloggers, photographers and tour operators;
- Participating in tourism fairs (independently or together with regional and / or national tourism organizations);
- Printing promotional materials (catalogues, brochures, maps, etc.) that will be mainly distributed at fairs, exhibitions and special presentations to potential tourists, travel agencies and tour operators;
- Strengthen e-marketing activities (creating a destination website, promotion on social networks, travel blogs, etc.).

Traditional marketing channels are very important in the placement of tourist destinations, but you should definitely use the possibilities of e-marketing¹. Digital promotion channels and online marketing provide completely new tools and platforms and, therefore, huge opportunities for destination promotion, which do not exist in the world of traditional media. Also, compared to traditional channels, digital marketing channels are more affordable and the impact is bigger, stronger and accurately measurable.

Today, digital marketing channels are more accessible to the general population than printed

ones, and provide easier market segmentation and the ability to target and personalize promotional messages to different market segments.

Today, the use of the Internet in tourism has become an indispensable part of marketing communication with potential tourists who, before making decisions about travel, mostly search for information on the Internet. The Internet provides potential tourists with a wide range of information about the destination (accommodation, locations, attractions, events, transportation, etc.). In addition to written information and descriptions, it is possible to attach an unlimited number of photos, videos and audio recordings.

The interactive approach to communication with tourists in the decision-making process of choosing a tourist destination has put social media, tourist blogs, interactive maps and 3D virtual tours in the foreground. Tourism products can be promoted by organizing a study visit for bloggers in the field of tourism who will describe their experiences in their texts and videos.

Social networks (Facebook, Instagram, etc.) are becoming the dominant sources of information collection on the Internet today. Content created by tourists is often identified with the recommendations of friends, family or a group of like-minded people, and becomes one of the crucial sources of information for tourists.

The Facebook social network is one of the most widespread social networks in the world, and by using it for tourism purposes can influence the raising of awareness about the tourist destination and products. Facebook also provides the possibility of so-called smart advertising with low investment in campaigns and selecting the desired audience according to predefined criteria. Most tourism organizations in the region take advantage of Facebook advertising. Photos and multimedia content on most profiles are of high quality and focused on promoting local tourist content and attractions.

Instagram is a social network for sharing photos, has more than a billion active users, and is especially suitable for use on modern portable smart devices. From a marketing point of view, Instagram can be a great tool for connecting with tourists, as well as for building the image and brand of a destination. Unlike other social networks, Instagram is photocentric, photos (and videos) are in the foreground, while textual content is put in the background. Most of the tourist organizations in this region have not yet recognized the importance of this social network and do not have an active Instagram profile.

¹ The term e-marketing refers to all activities undertaken in order to make the best use of the opportunities offered by modern IT technology, and especially the capabilities of the Internet that allows direct communication with potential tourists (consumers).

YouTube, as one of the most popular social networks with video content, has an exceptional impact on tourism, and especially on tourist destinations and tourist experiences. Tourist organizations of North Banat and Tamiš County are still not using the advantages of this medium

Figure 2. Elements of e-marketing

Destination website

Profile on social networks (Facebook, Instagram, etc.)

Tourist blogs

Interactive maps and 3D virtual tours

Digital brochures and catalogs

2. PORTFOLIO OF TOURISM PRODUCTS

The development of the North Banat region and the Tamiš County as an integrated tourism product is the focus when creating individual elements of the tourist offer of the observed area. An integral tourism product requires a holistic approach to creation while respecting the specifics of the observed area on the one hand, while on the other hand it implies proactive monitoring of modern trends in tourist demand. The development of an integrated tourism product implies the integration of existing tourism products with (if necessary) modifications, as well as the simultaneous development of new tourism products. Globalization of the economy, and thus of tourist trends, conditions the erasure or ignoring of administrative borders between countries, and the only border that is established is the compatibility of resource base and existing tourist offer in terms of optimal building of authentic and unique integrated tourism product of the observed region.

Having in mind the key settlements covered by this study, the resource base is heterogeneous, with the dominance of natural tourist attractions. In addition to natural attractions, cultural and historical attractions are an important basis for creating a rich portfolio of tourism products.

The development of new tourism products can be done based on the identified and valorised resource base. Observed from a strategic point of view, it can be concluded that in the region of Northern Banat and Tamiš County seven different types of tourism products can successfully be developed:

- 1. Tourism products that are based primarily on historical and cultural elements;
- 2. Tourism products that are based primarily on **cyclotourism** / **cycling tourism**;

- 3. Tourism products that are based primarily on events;
- 4. Tourism products that are based primarily on **gastronomy**;
- 5. Tourism products that are based primarily on **short vacations/breaks**;
- 6. Tourism products that are based primarily on **ecotourism**;
- 7. Tourism products that are based primarily on **active tourism**.

As these are extremely heterogeneous products, it should be noted that there is no clear boundary between different types of products. This means that certain elements of supply, but also resource bases can be present in different types of products. Resources become tourism resources through planning activities, while a tourism product comes to fruition through the process of creation, presentation and interpretation. As one of the main goals of the development of the tourist offer is to raise the quality of life of the local population, inter alia through increased tourist demand and consumption, and within the framework of sustainable tourism, further development strategies should encourage networking and heterogeneity of supply, which supports modern trends in tourism demand.

The primary types of tourism products of the observed region are presented in the next part of the document, through the most important elements.

2.1 History and culture

Cultural tourism includes all relationships and phenomena that arise from cultural activities that take place in a tourist area. It includes tourist travels with the intention of having new experiences and gaining new knowledge to meet their cultural needs. As such, it is based on local and regional cultural resources and cultural heritage. Cultural heritage as a resource, in addition to material heritage, includes living expression and tradition that local communities inherit from their ancestors and pass on to their descendants. Having in mind the current level of tourist development of the observed area, it can be concluded that this type of tourism product has significant potential for some settlements, while for others it is the main drive for development. At the same time, cultural tourism contributes to the enrichment of cultural content for both tourists and locals. In addition, cultural tourism plays a significant role in the protection of cultural heritage. Also, cultural tourism is compatible with rural as well as urban areas.

Table 1. Tourism products based on historical and cultural elements

Product concept	Resource basis
 Cultural and entertainment events Animation of cultural spaces Alternative cultural spaces Story telling 	Cultural monumentsTheatresGalleriesReligious objects

- Street art
- Tourist routes
- Presentation of art, lore and skills
- Education
- Tours
- Virtual tours

- Craft workshops
- Folklore heritage
- Spatial-cultural-historical units
- Famous places
- Memorials
- Architecture
- Archaeological sites
- Intangible heritage
- Industrial heritage

Directions of development:

Culture tourists are of higher education and socio-economic status, they are mature and of older age, with on-average higher tourist spending and longer stays in tourist destinations. Most often, these are experienced travellers who visit an above-average number of cultural attractions and know exactly what they are looking for. The growth of interest in cultural tourism and new experiences is noticeable in world tourism trends. Contemporary cultural tourists are looking to relive local and authentic cultural experiences that are no longer reduced to mere sightseeing, but to active participation in cultural experience and events. Research indicates a significant increase in demand for this type of tourism in the future. Cultural tourism takes place throughout the year and has no seasonal character, and as such is suitable for inclusion in other tourism products.

Having in mind the rich cultural and historical heritage of North Banat and Tamiš County, it can be concluded that cultural tourism can be one of the main backbones of the region's tourism development. Rich history and many cultural and historical sites, as well as interesting architecture and industrial heritage are a good basis for building cultural tourism products in various forms. These can be one-day or multi-day visits that include the most important cultural and historical attractions of the observed area. Rich history and turbulent events in the past can be revived through storytelling and animation tours, the realization of which does not require much time and does not have to involve large investments and, on the other hand, attracts a large number of tourists. The existence of numerous alternative cultural spaces can support the development of various cultural and educational events, such as concerts, exhibitions, presentations, education, etc. Investments in the adaptation and adjustment of these spaces require more money and time than animation tours, so their planning should be approached from the aspect of their future multifunctional role. A large number of memorials from the period of the First and Second World War provide an opportunity to create narrowly specialized tourism products that can be used as educational tourism. Having in mind the current environmental challenges and the global health situation, it is necessary to aim for digitalization and VR tourism experience in the widest possible range in the tourism offer, which will have a positive impact on this region's market positioning, as well as promotional activities.

2.2 Cyclotourism/Cycling tourism

This product can be most easily described as a travel activity that includes a bicycle with the goal to enjoy. The motive for this tourism product is rest and relaxation, a healthy lifestyle and a stay in nature. This product contains two categories of tourists: those who rent bicycles at a certain destination, as well as those who use bicycles when traveling as a means of transportation. In the era of promoting healthy lifestyles, cycling tourism has gained in importance. This product, on average, is most often used by middle-aged people, more often men, of secondary or higher education, with higher incomes. The most important resources for tourists who gravitate to this product are resources that provide road safety (especially low road traffic), then, marked routes, various content that can be reached during a visit to destinations, accommodation facilities tailored to their needs. It is estimated that the share of this type of travel will grow in the next ten years. So, this is a product with the greatest development prospects.

Table 2. Tourism products based on cyclotourism

Product concept Resource basis Cultural and entertainment events • Special nature reserves • Nature parks Animation of cultural spaces • Tourist signalization Alternative cultural spaces • Rural households Tourist routes Sports fields and courts Presentation of art, lore/knowledge • Cultural monuments and skills • Religious objects Active vacation • Folklore heritage Classic holiday enriched with • Spatial-cultural-historical units activities • Famous places Memorials Outdoor tourism - activity in preserved nature Architecture Spatial-cultural-historical units???? Cycling, triathlon in nature (biking) Famous places???? • Extreme sports: paragliding, free climbing, free jumping, surfing

Directions of development:

Since it's a relief of the plains, the observed area is extremely suitable for the development of cyclotourism. Due to this fact, it is necessary to provide a network of bicycle trails that will be the backbone of the development of cycling tourism products. The uniqueness of this area is reflected in the fact that several EuroVelo routes pass through this border region. The most important for the part of North Banat and Tamiš County are the routes EuroVelo 11, as well as EuroVelo 13. The second route connects Serbia and this part of Banat with Romania, where the route from Timisoara to the border with Serbia has already been made. The aforementioned EuroVelo 13 route is followed by the creation of five thematic bicycle routes located in the area of North Banat. These theme routes are marked as follows: eco bike route, culture bike route, gastro bike route, ethno bike route and leisure bike route. First of all, it is necessary to connect the key service providers in the destination of North Banat and Tamiš County with an adequate and marked bicycle route. The infrastructure required for this

product also includes the offer of accommodation facilities adapted to cyclists' needs. The diversity of accommodation offer in this area greatly facilitates the starting position for the development of cycling tourism. However, it is necessary to acquaint the accommodation providers with the specific requirements of cyclists, which most often relate to: space for safe parking of bicycles, the possibility of renting accommodation for one night, the possibility of using tools, preparing different types of breakfast, etc. In the near future, it is important to think about *Bike and Bed* standards.

The product of cyclotourism can be fully integrated with the product of short breaks, where the specific traits of the target group of cyclists would be taken into account when making certain offers. In this way, new tourism products will be created, and cyclotourism, as a leading product, will be a link in activating natural and newly created tourist attractions in the border area destination. Creating partnerships with border destinations has a significant promotional role in attracting cyclists. This way, it is possible to organize sports cycling events, which would play a crucial role in positioning and creating the image of this destination.

2.3 Events

Cultural tourism in its broadest sense includes a specific form of tourism - event tourism or occasions tourism. However, as a large number of events of different types, sizes and lengths are held on the territory of North Banat and Tamiš County, with different levels of influence, we can rightfully single out event tourism as a special type of tourism product that may be important for tourism and economic development in the future. Research suggests that in the initial stages, cultural tourism was primarily focused on tangible cultural heritage, whereas today, the cultural events are becoming increasingly important. It must be noted here that tourism, in addition to cultural events, includes other types of events such as sports and recreational events, religious events, business events, etc. Events play a significant role in building the cultural perception of tourists, which undeniably models the image of the place. At the same time, rural areas are increasingly recognized as the optimal environment for organizing events in various fields. In addition to visiting and participating in the event itself, most tourists consume other available tourism products and services in the area.

Table 3. Tourism products based on events

Product concept	Resource basis
 Cultural and entertainment events 	Cultural monumentsTheatres
Sports eventsBusiness Events (MICE)Economic events	GalleriesReligious objects

- Religious events
- Animation of cultural spaces
- Street art events
- Art-form events
- Presentation of art, lore/knowledge and skills
- Education
- Tours
- Virtual tours
- Team-building events

- Sports centres
- Business centres
- City centre
- Parks and green areas
- Craft workshops
- Folklore heritage
- Spatial-cultural-historical units
- Famous places
- Memorials
- Industrial heritage
- Citizens' associations

Directions of development:

The data show that more than 1000 cultural events annually, before the Corona virus pandemic, were maintained in the territory of Vojvodina. This data refers only to cultural events, without sports, business, religious and other events. The development of tourism in the direction of event tourism has significant advantages, because the events are more flexible than the tangible cultural heritage, which opens the possibility of differentiating tourist destinations in relation to the competition. Also, the production of events generates some (possibly) missing tourist resources and creates a basis for building a tourist offer in places that cannot boast of significant tourist resources. The events themselves bring the local population a specific atmosphere, experience, sense of belonging, participation and pride, which is especially important for smaller places/settlements. The territory of North Banat and Tamiš County has a large number of regional and local events that have been realized for many years and which are recognized in the tourist market. Further development of these events should go in the direction of diversifying the program activities and establishing active partnerships with all stakeholders in the local community (cultural and sports organizations, citizens' associations, public institutions, business and tourism sectors, etc.). Especially important in this case is the cooperation and harmonization of the common long-term goal and interests between the representatives of the local self-government - the local tourist organization - the organizers of the event. Also, strategic planning of the event dynamics and type in the entire region, in the context of better market positioning, should be the task of local and regional tourism organizations. Active inclusion of events in the tourist offer is the task of both the organizers and tourist organizations and the local community, which means that timely and complete information need to be easily available to potential tourist demand. Creating a package deal with visit to the events as the base motivation can greatly contribute to increasing tourist spending. In addition to large and / or public events, specific closed events can be organized in the observed region and significantly affect tourist traffic. This primarily refers to the training, celebrations and team-building of large corporations, as well as other business entities that need to occasionally move part of their business activities out of offices.

2.4 Gastronomy

Gastronomic tourism includes visits of tourists to food and beverage producers, gastronomic festivals and events, restaurants and specific spots where the consumption of food and / or beverages is the primary motive/drive for travel. Through gastronomic tourism, tourists get to know and learn the food specifics and culture of the local area, and there is also the possibility of buying local gastronomic products. Wine and beer tourism are part of gastronomic tourism. Gastronomic tourism is an indispensable element of almost every tourist trip and we can justifiably say that it is "the first among equals". As the culture of food preparation presents a form of intangible cultural heritage, gastronomic tourism is also a type of cultural tourism. The average tourist spends about a third of their budget on drinks and food during their travels. At the same time, the consumption of food and beverages is mostly viewed as an educational and hedonistic experience, and not as an existential need. Gastronomic tourism is not primarily bound by seasons, but is available throughout the year. It is closely related to agriculture, crafts and is equally represented in rural and urban areas.

Table 4. Tourism products based on gastronomy

Product concept	Resource basis
 Wine routes Specialized tastings Educational events Schools and courses Cultural and entertainment events Storytelling Tourist routes Presentation of art, lore/knowledge and skills Exhibits, gatherings, festivals and fairs Animation tours 	 Restaurants Vineyards Wineries Breweries Tasting halls Agricultural farms Agricultural cooperatives Accommodation facilities Craftsmen and domestic craftsmen Markets and local vendors Religious objects Craft workshops Spatial-cultural-historical units

Directions of development:

Vojvodina as a whole, and thus North Banat, as well as the Tamiš County, offers a wide range of gastronomic specialties that are passed down through the generations. Multiculturalism, as one of the unique features of this area, is completely transferred to the field of gastronomy. Therefore, on the table we can see a unique mixture of Hungarian, Romanian, German, Austrian, Slovak, Bulgarian, Macedonian, Turkish and Serbian cuisine. It is this diversity that is one of the strongest links in the gastronomy of this region. Having in mind the desire of modern tourists to keep food healthy, organic agriculture and animal husbandry represent the most important complementary link in the value chain of gastronomic tourism. As there is a tendency in the world to turn to healthy food, gastrotourism can be based on ecologically clean food that is prepared and consumed in the traditional way (*slow food*). Agriculture and livestock, in addition to providing basic resources for food and beverage production, can also provide a unique tourist experience.

Almost every agricultural and livestock farm and cooperative with a little investment and a lot of creativity can become an attractive tourist place where tourists can hear and see firsthand the production and processing and participate in some activities, which gives tourists an authentic experience and provides farmers with additional income and the possibility of direct sales. This requires a partnership between food producers and the tourism industry, but also setting quality standards for local products and services. Also, the formation of a regional gastronomic brand and the definition of regional specialties leads to the creation of the region's image and being recognizable. We should not forget the significant potential of wineries and breweries, including small craft breweries, which can be the basis for building themed routes. Gastrotourism can be presented in the form of various events ('kobasicijada' [sausage festival], 'kulenijada' [hot flavoured sausage festival], 'pasuljijada' [beans festival], etc.), but also through creative combinations and events with other arts (music, painting, theatre, etc.), which has a very positive effect on the local community. The key words of gastrotourism are "local" and "authentic", so, preparation of food and drinks aims towards the use of local ingredients. Fish soup and fish stew have completely different tastes in different places in the same region, which creates a wide range of experiences.

2.5 Short Breaks

One of the most important trends in world tourism in recent years is the increase in the frequency of short breaks. A short vacation or break is by definition a trip that includes one to three nights with the goal of escaping from everyday life, and represents the second, third or fourth vacation of the year. This is one of the products with the highest global activity and very high long-term potential. It is a relatively highly competitive product that can be commercialized quickly and efficiently. The specific feature of this product is reflected in the fact that it combines several different forms of tourism, where the primary motive for visiting the destination depends on the personal preferences of tourists. These motives most often refer to culture, gastronomy, events and manifestations, then, classic vacations, enjoying the nature and such. The product "City break" is one of the most common segments of short breaks. Its role is also very important in encouraging investments into various sectors of the local government, such as infrastructure, culture, sports, construction, etc.

Table 5. Tourism products based on short breaks

Product concept	Resource basis
 Cultural and entertainment events Animation of cultural spaces Alternative cultural spaces Storytelling Street art Tourist routes Active vacation 	 Cultural monuments Theatres Galleries Religious objects Special nature reserves Nature parks Landscapes of outstanding features

- Classic holiday enriched with activities
- Outdoor tourism activity in preserved nature
- Hiking
- Cycling, triathlon in nature (biking)
- Kayaking

- Craft workshops
- Folklore heritage
- Spatial-cultural-historical units
- Famous places
- Memorials
- Architecture
- Vineyards
- Wineries

Directions of development:

Given the heterogeneous quality of this tourist area, as well as its tourist attractions, this product must become a priority in the offer of the observed region. It is the heterogeneity of space and attractions that offers the possibility of combining different forms of tourism. The dominance of attractions in the tourist area will be the theme of the tourism product of short vacations. Themes that can be taken into consideration when creating products relate to: culture and events, sports and recreation, gastronomy and rural tourism, health and ecotourism, etc. The focus in building this product should be on weekends and extended weekends, in order to increase the accommodation occupancy factor. Also, attention must be paid to the fact that this is a product that can be marketed throughout the year, with special emphasis on the pre- and post-season.

One of the most pronounced trends in Europe is visiting small towns. Urban environments provide various social, cultural and economic activities that attract people, and tourism is the main service activity in them as well. The town and cities of North Banat and Tamiš County must provide quality living environment for the population and as such they will be attractive to tourists as well. Tourism requires large investments in infrastructure, but these investments benefit both the local community and the business sector, and most towns already have various resources that can serve as tourist attractions (landscaped squares, architecture, museums, events, parks, etc.). The urban areas of the observed region must first of all understand the potential they have and start creating City break products that will unite the offer of several towns and cities in this region. The development of short break products requires addressing the issues as an individual, at the level of the destination (interaction of companies, authorities and other actors), and at the level of a larger geographical or regional area. Given the complexity of tourism in which a package of services and goods go together through the activities of entrepreneurs, planners, service providers and tourists, special attention must be paid to strengthening the connection of different stakeholders at the destination that will combine the same goal. Establishing cooperation and partnerships of all stakeholders is a key element of the success of this product.

2.6 Ecotourism

The development of ecotourism relies on the valorisation of natural tourist attractions, but also of all the accompanying cultural specifics. It takes place in spaces with preserved and attractive nature. Motivation for education and gaining knowledge about the natural environment is a key feature of ecotourism. It provides protection, directly benefits the economic development and

political empowerment of local communities, and encourages respect for different cultures and human rights. It emphasizes local participation, ownership and business opportunities. The appearance of ecotourism in the world marked a change in the behaviour of the participants, the need for a more humane approach, spiritual enrichment of the person and a more purposeful attitude towards natural and anthropogenic tourism values. In functional terms, ecotourism on the market is mostly individual or small-scale tourism, for groups of up to 25 people and hotels with up to 100 beds, for small and medium-sized companies. It is presented as a market segment focused on guiding and accommodating small groups in natural areas, with a represented educational component, the use of natural materials and local specialized guides.

Table 6. Tourism products based on ecotourism

Resource basis			
 Special nature reserves Nature parks Landscapes of outstanding features Natural beauty and biodiversity Local culture and tradition Local events related to the cultural heritage and customs of the residents 			

Directions of development:

Protected natural assets would be a set of attractions, and the main activities should be their observation and sightseeing (bird and wildlife watching - photo safaris, walking and enjoying unusual sights and beauties, various research and studies). Other content for practicing various activities in the use of free time, based on mastering various skills and special interests: walking, cycling, boating, quad riding, small train rides, carriage riding etc., horseback riding, rowing, orienteering, survival in nature, sports activities, summer ecocamps, etc. The basic model of ecotourism product development of the observed border region of North Banat - Tamiš County should be in the formation of an efficient value chain that includes contents of ecological and rural character, eco-rural product, and a sustainable model of ecotourism destination should be an eco-rural destination. It is necessary to develop the concept of programmed and improved ecotourism, by including the elements and content of traditional rural and ethno-tourism, in products that will be more competitive in the market. The construction of facilities in eco-destinations must be controlled, environmentally licensed and reduced to the minimum necessary. The main receptive base for ecotourists should be in the existing and construction of new facilities (small capacities) in the rural zone that will be used simultaneously in rural and ethno-tourism. Starting from the concept of ecotourism, one cannot count on mass services and "economies of scale". Given the small volume of activities, economic sustainability should be ensured by a higher level of prices and total consumption per user. On the other hand, general market conditions,

as well as relatively underdeveloped infrastructure do not provide opportunities for market valorisation of ecotourism products at prices that would guarantee their economic sustainability. This means that the planning and development of tourism infrastructure, its later use, as well as marketing programs, including the formation of an assortment of tourism products, must be directed towards the model of polyvalent use of capacity. Using the infrastructure of other forms of tourism with the gradual development of own capacities and products (shaping, promotion, placement), would enable the economic sustainability of ecotourism programs in the initial phase of development.

2.7 Active tourism

Active tourism is focused on the complex experiences that visitors expect at the destination. These forms of tourism are a combination of different products and experiences. *Active tourism* has especially emerged in marketing - as a new philosophy of travel that combines adventure, culture and ecotourism (ACE). It has many points of contact with ecotourism and nature tourism, and also integrates some of the adventure tourism activities. In addition, it includes aspects of cultural tourism and scientific and educational expeditions. Significant elements are recreation and education, respect and observation, action, exercise and active involvement in society as acquaintance of local friends. Active tourism shares similar goals as ecotourism, but it is not determined by destination or location, but more by types of stay. It requires active physical and intellectual participation regardless of the destination. Different forms of active tourism have the biggest trend of increase in tourists numbers, where practically all world destinations try to provide tourists with setting for active vacation in various environments.

Table 7. Tourism products based on active tourism

Resource basis **Product concept** • Spatial-cultural-historical units Active vacation • Famous places Classic holiday enriched with • Special nature reserves activities • Nature parks • Outdoor tourism - activity in • Tourist signalization preserved nature • Rural households Hiking Sports fields and courts Cycling, triathlon in nature (biking) Events related to the cultural heritage Kayaking and customs of the local population Extreme sports: paragliding, free Water surfaces climbing, free jumping, surfing Associations that promote local traditions and old crafts

Directions of development:

A whole series of active stay content manifestations appear today depending precisely on the conditions of the environment or facilities for active vacation. Offers on the market of active tourism are related to only one or more activities that take place on water and in the air

(kayaking, canoeing, rafting, paragliding, skydiving, etc.). In the North Banat area, it is necessary to point out the lack of camps for recreation and active vacation. Many tourists who visit this area are interested in the local population's lifestyle and it would be very interesting for them to visit old craftsmen, naive artists, local fairs, weddings, settlements, folklore events, etc., and to actively participate in certain programs. It is necessary to create offers that would include getting to know the local culture and landscapes through active products based on cycling, picking medicinal herbs and mushrooms, picking fruit, participating in rural activities (making brandy, mowing grass, grinding grain, haymaking, grafting fruit, sowing and watering vegetables, working with domestic animals, knitting, embroidery, preparing food for winter, etc.), engaging in sports activities (tennis, golf, indoor soccer, basketball, handball, swimming in pools, rivers, lakes etc.). The basic model of active product development in the North Banat region and Tamiš County should be in building an efficient value chain that includes content that will complement the time spent at the destination. It is necessary to develop the infrastructure that would be the basis for active tourism content programming, which is primarily related to the construction and arrangement of bicycle paths; marking paths/trails on maps; arranging rest areas, spaces for socializing and picnics, lookouts along marked trails; organizing schools, camps and courses for mastering certain sports (horseback riding, kayaking and surfing, etc.); organizing unique experiences in nature. This product can provide mass service and direct involvement of the local population. Investments in the development of this product should initially be focused on educating the local population and organizing adequate workshops that would help create the offer.

3. TARGET GROUPS AND TARGET (GEO) MARKETS

Current and future tourist offer of the region of North Banat and Tamiš County, as well as key tourism products should meet the needs and requirements of different target groups of visitors. It is very important that marketing efforts are focused on generating an image of a unique destination of the border region, but different values will also be identified for each target group. Accordingly, permanent research of markets and trends, and of guests' preference and their needs is of great importance.

Several typical target groups can be defined based on tourism products, each of which has its own preferences, different interests, tendencies and rules of conduct, which need to be responded to:

- Families
- Families (small children)
- Families (adolescents)
- Young
- Couples
- Seniors
- Groups of friends

- Business people
- DINKS
- Empty nesters
- Golden oldies
- Athletes
- Recreationalists
- Backpackers

Also, it is necessary to clearly define the priority target markets (those tourist markets from which the interest and arrival of guests can be expected through various analyses), in order to ensure that marketing activities through available communication channels are directed in the most efficient way. Resources for proactive marketing activity are limited and must focus on a smaller number of target markets to ensure the best results.

Rationalization of marketing activities is important primarily due to the relatively small budgets available to local tourism organizations and therefore it is important to determine the priority emission markets in which tourism products will be commercialized.

The region of North Banat and Tamiš County has a favourable traffic position, because it is located at the intersection of Corridor 10 and Corridor 7 and should use the opportunity to attract markets which can access it relatively easily. Having in mind the traffic position, but also the trends in foreign markets for demand for products that are in the portfolio of North Banat, the following target markets can be listed:

Priority A	Priority B	Priority C
Hungary	Poland	Italy
Serbia	Slovenia	France
Romania	Austria	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Germany	Bulgaria	North Macedonia
Slovakia	Croatia	Czech Republic
60%	20%	20%

Table 8. International target markets

In addition to defining international priority target markets, the potential of the domestic market is also important, which represents half of the total tourist traffic of AP Vojvodina, the Republic of Serbia and Romania.

National markets also gain added value due to the COVID-19 pandemic situation. The part of the population that travelled predominantly outside the country is now increasingly directed to domestic destinations (due to travel restrictions and stricter rules of conduct in foreign countries due to the pandemic).

4. PROPOSALS AND ACTION PLAN

4.1 Proposals

The tourist destination of North Banat and Tamiš County should be a strategically defined tourism unit, recognizable by its specific features and tourism products. It must have a clear image and brand, and provide conditions for further development of the tourist offer. The offer should be shaped with respect for general and special trends, which dominate the world tourist market and which should be constantly researched. Such an approach is conditioned by the growing pressure of the competitive environment.

Accordingly, the following proposals for improving tourism are given:

1. Establishment of a destination management organization (DMO) of North Banat and Tamiš County on regional level

The goals of destination management organizations are not only branding and promotion of the destination, but also managing the development of tourism in the destination. DMO, as a representative of the public bearer of tourism policy, defines the general goals of the destination and its activities in terms of developing relationships and platforms of cooperation with partners and service providers from public and private sector, must work to unify their individual goals of common interest. The tasks of the DMO are: development of new tourism products, application of technological innovations, development of human resources, marketing and sales, infrastructure development, development projects and investments.

2. Creation of the Internet portal of North Banat and Tamiš County

Websites are one of the basic digital communication channels. The content of the site should be available in English, Romanian and Serbian, as well as in several other languages. The content should be designed so that in addition to news, it presents structured tourism products, as well as practical information related to arrival, stay, accommodation and traffic. The site must also be correlated with the sites of tourism organizations in the border region that promote tourism activities in much more detail. A proactive attitude on the page can be achieved with the option of online contact via e-mail, the section with frequently asked questions and answers, through sweepstakes, online surveys, online booking of accommodation, tours and activities, the option of direct contact via a chat platform, etc.

3. Advertising on social networks

Advertising through social networks, primarily Facebook or Instagram, as well as other digital channels, is one of the most effective advertising channels with exceptional effects in terms of building and positioning the destination brand.

The trend of using short video content in the promotion of tourist destinations is more and more present, especially with the growing popularity of Instagram Story (tourist photo stories) as a content form, as well as the emergence of new increasingly popular platforms such as TikTok.

4. Collaboration with bloggers and influencers

Cooperation with opinion leaders in the online environment (influencers) has been present for several years, and tourist destinations are increasingly deciding to hire bloggers and influencers.

5. User-generated content

The use of user-generated content (UGC) is also one of the most advanced strategies in the promotion of tourist destinations, because tourists trust more content created by tourists themselves, while destination management using such content facilitates the regular placement of content on social networks. saves time and resources.

6. Visualization and virtual reality

The visualization aims to bring the destination and tourist content closer to tourists, in order to direct the decision-making process towards the destination. Virtual guides, interactive maps, infographics are most often used, all with the aim of making it easier and faster for tourists to get acquainted with the destination's offer.

Virtual tours can be filmed from the ground, from the air, but also from inside the building, which, with a combination of photos and videos, makes an attractive way of presenting the destination that attracts tourists and introduces them to the destination before visiting. Virtual tours can show tourists otherwise sensitive and hard-to-reach places, such as certain archaeological sites and the like.

Thanks to new technologies, not only can the destination's experience be presented on a much more attractive level, but the destination can stand out with its contents in relation to competing destinations.

7. Participation in tourist fairs

Attendance at the most important European tourism fairs is very important, because it creates a basis for the region brand of the border to position itself and further expand and improve its destination identity. Participating in tourism fairs is also a way to get in touch with tour operators, travel agencies and other potential partners for cooperation. Also, tourism fairs are a good opportunity to present new products, marketing activities and general news related to the region of North Banat and Tamiš County as tourist destinations. The fairs can be performed independently or in cooperation with regional or national tourism organizations.

8. Organizing press trips

Sightseeing tours and excursions are study trips for journalists (in this way they get to know the destination directly and thus get a basis for writing tourist articles) and travel agents from emission markets, as well as for other travel intermediaries. These trips give a first-hand experience of the border region's tourist offer. Excursions can include guided tours, various activities, hotel tours as well as gastronomic and cultural experiences. The very nature of the trip, unless agents are selected, specialists for a particular product, should be general in order to get a general overview of the tourist experience of the region.

9. Publishing publications

Publications (printed and in electronic form) are an important means of communication and information, but also image development. Publications represent a destination, with attractions and tourism products, with the reason to attract the interest of potential tourists. All publications must have a similar design, in order to be able to identify elements of the brand, and to provide practical information and have a format for easy use.

10. Publishing a calendar of events

As the event product has been identified as one of the *quick win* products, special event brochures need to be produced. The brochure should be formulated in such a way as to acquaint the tourist in detail with the events that take place throughout the year in North Banat and Tamiš County, organized by months and types of events, with detailed information about the festival, festival history, accommodation and related activities. Types of events can be: festivals, events for children and youth, fairs, gastronomic events (wine and food festivals), anniversaries, special events, sports events, etc. Additionally, at the end of the brochure, general information can be given in the sense of: arrival in Serbia (required documents, laws, general information, practical advice and traffic information).

4.2 Action plan

The action plan for the development of tourism in the border region of North Banat - Tamiš County covers a wider area that does not fully follow the geographical-administrative border of the region, but is based on resource-tourism-economic basis as the foundation for building an integrated tourism product. The action plan covers seven groups of tourism products that the authors believe can have the highest market efficiency in terms of resource base - supply market - demand market in the field of tourism. Also, the product portfolio groups defined in this way have a high level of compatibility and the possibility of further market connections with the cross-border regions of neighbouring Hungary, but also inclusion in already existing products such as the EUROVELO 11 and 13 cycling routes.

The portfolio of tourism products defined in this way, and the marketing action plan created for them, is compatible with the basic guidelines and directions of tourism development on the territory of Serbia and Romania.

The action plan for the said product portfolio defines marketing activities and instruments, the necessary infrastructure, communication channels, as well as promotion, distribution and sales activities. The activities in the action plan can be divided into several groups:

- activities related to raising the quality of **infrastructure** in order to develop new products;
- activities related to raising the quality of existing tourism **products**, as well as the development of new products;
- marketing in order to stimulate demand in the national and regional market, as well as in other targeted geographic markets;
- encouraging the creation of an **intersectoral** partnership in order to build a more optimal value chain of an integrated tourism product;
- encouraging the creation of an **inter-destination** partnership in order to build a more optimal value chain of an integrated tourism product;
- **education** of all stakeholders in order to define and understand common goals, interests and actions;
- Inclusion of complementary areas in the tourism value chain.

4.2.1 Infrastructure

- Activities related to providing infrastructure for quality presentation of tourist attractions and products;
- Activities of permanent investment in the most important tourist attractions;
- Provide conditions for inclusion of all interested stakeholders in the value chain.

Table 9. Infrastructure

FOCUS	ACTIVITIES	CARRIERS	TIME FRAME
Infrastructure	arranged parking lots for cars and	LTO, DMO	priority,
	buses;		continuous
	- secured parking for bicycles;		_
Tourist	tourist information centres;	LTO, municipalities,	priority,
infrastructure	- souvenir shops and joint sales	DMO,	continuous
	centres of the region;	entrepreneurs,	
		interested	
		stakeholders	
Tourist	- multilingual info boards;	LTO, DMO	priority
signalization	- QR information codes;		
Road	- construction and reconstruction of	LTO, DMO,	priority,
infrastructure	bicycle paths;	municipalities	continuous
	- construction and reconstruction of		
	pedestrian paths;		
	- installation of public lighting and		
	furniture on tourist sites;		
Internet and	- available wi-fi network;	municipalities, LTO	priority
digitalization	- tourist info-computers available		
	24 hours;		
Planning	- creating and constantly updating	LTO, DMO,	continuous
documents	the regional database of all relevant	Interested stakeholders	
and	tourist attractions;		
organization	creating work groups that will deal		
activities	with individual product portfolios		

4.2.2 Product portfolio development

- Diversification of the product portfolio;
- Expanding the market demand from a geographical point of view;
- Inclusion of new market segments of demand;
- Animating small businesses to enter the tourist offer.

FOCUS	ACTIVITIES	CARRIERS	TIME FRAME
Tourism products based on culture and history	 creation of new tourism products; innovation of existing tourism products; inclusion of cultural and historical attractions in other tourist attractions products; inclusion of small business and crafts in the tourist offer 	LTO, DMO, municipality, interested stakeholders	continuous
Tourism products based on gastronomy	- creating new tourism products; - innovation of existing tourist products; - creating stronger ties of gastrotourism with other tourism products; - inclusion of agriculture, small business and crafts in tourist offer;	LTO, DMO, municipality, interested stakeholders	continuous
Tourist products based on events	 harmonization of the dates of events realization; creating an event calendar; events program diversification; inclusion of creative industry and other stakeholders in the event itself; strengthening the tourism aspect of events; 	event organizers, LTO, DMO, municipalities, interested stakeholders	continuous
Tourism products Based on cyclotourism	- innovation of existing cyclo- routes; - connecting with international routes and networks;	LTO, DMO, municipalities, sports and recreational cycling associations, interested stakeholders	continuous
Tourism products based on active tourism	 creating new tourism products; innovation of existing tourism products; stronger connection with other tourism products; inclusion of small businesses in the tourist offer; 	LTO, DMO, municipalities, sports and recreation cycling associations, interested stakeholders	continuous

Tourism products based on ecotourism	creation of new tourism products; innovation of existing tourism products; stronger connections with other tourism products; inclusion of small businesses in the tourist offer; active inclusion of rural settlements in the tourist offer; active protection of natural attractions from potentially negative impact of tourism.	LTO, DMO, municipalities, managers of protected natural assets, local rural communities, interested stakeholders	continuous
Tourist products based on short breaks/vacations	 creating new tourism products; innovation of existing tourism products; inclusion of small businesses and crafts in the tourist offer. 	LTO, DMO, municipalities, interested stakeholders	continuous

4.2.3 Marketing

- Strengthening the image of the North Banat region and Tamiš County;
- Strengthening marketing activities for promotional purposes;
- Building internal marketing of the North Banat region and Tamiš County..

Table 11. Marketing

FOCUS	ACTIVITIES	CARRIERS	TIME FRAME
Establishing a	- creating a logo	LTO,	continuous
brand of the	- creating slogans	DMO,	
North Banat			
region and			
Tamiš county			

	creating a multilingual site of	LTO,	priority,
	the border region	DMO,	continuous
	posting materials on social		
	networks		
Strengthening	presentation at fairs and		
the	other gatherings		
communication	production of multilingual		
activities	brochures and maps		
	cooperation with bloggers		
	and influencers		
	active monitoring of tourist		
	reviews		
	promotional tours for media		
	representatives		
	cooperation with local receptive	LTO, DMO,	continuous
	travel agencies	tourist/travel	
Sales	cooperation with emitting travel	agencies, other	
improvement	agencies in targeted geo markets	sales agents,	
	presence on digital sales platforms	interested	
		stakeholders	
Internal	periodic publication of information on	LTO, DMO,	continuous
marketing of the	current affairs in the region for all	all interested	
North Banat	members of the region	stakeholders	
region and Tamiš			
County			

4.2.4 Partnership

- Unification of the basis for planned and coordinated action of all elements of the tourist offer of the North Banat region and Tamiš County;
- Combining possible joint activities of the region (product creation, marketing, etc.);
- Strengthening the value chain of the integral tourism product of the North Banat region and Tamiš County.

Table 12. Partnership

FOCUS	ACTIVITIES	CARRIERS	TIME FRAME
	formation of interest groups /	LTO, DMO,	priority,
	clusters	interested	continuous
Cross - sectoral	- proactive and permanent	stakeholders	
partnerships	communication		
	 targeted, coordinated and timed activities and tasks for the purpose of the common interest identification and inclusion of new members into the cluster 		

Inter-destination partnerships	- formation of DMO - proactive and permanent communication - targeted, coordinated and timed activities and tasks for the purpose of the common interest - identification and inclusion of new partners	LTO, municipalities, interested stakeholders	priority, continuous
Strengthening the value chain at the destination	 proactive and permanent communication targeted, coordinated and timed activities and tasks for the purpose of the common interest identification and inclusion of new partners 	LTO, municipalities, DMO, interested stakeholders	priority, continuous
Cooperation with educational institutions	- inclusion of pupils and students of a certain educational profile in tourist activities and events by volunteering	LTO, municipalities, DMO, educational institutions	priority, continuous

4.2.5 Education

- Developing knowledge and skills for creating tourism products;
- Developing knowledge and skills for service delivery;
- Developing knowledge and skills for tourists reception.

Table 13. Education

FOCUS	ACTIVITIES	CARRIERS	TIME FRAME
Provider education		LTOs,	priority,
- creating a	workshops	municipalities,	continuous
tourism product	- presentation of a case study	DMOs, educational	
	- study trips	institutions,	
		entrepreneurs,	
		interested	
		stakeholders	
Provider education	- realization of seminars and	LTOs, municipalities,	priority,
- providing	workshops	DMOs, educational	continuous
services in tourism	- presentation of a case study	institutions,	
	- study trips	entrepreneurs,	
	· ·	interested	
		stakeholders	

Training for hosts - guests reception in tourism	realization of seminarsexamples of good practicestudy trips	LTOs, municipalities, DMOs, educational institutions, entrepreneurs, interested stakeholders	priority, continuous
Educating the local population about the impact of tourism on the local community	press conferencesdiscussions and round tablespromo eventsvolunteerism	LTO, municipalities, DMOs, educational institutions, local communities	priority, continuous

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