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Improving the Quality of Services in All-Inclusive Resorts by Monitoring Tourists Activities

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Abstract

All-inclusive system became very popular in the last decades due to the some advantages for tourists. It was adopted both by luxury locations and by more modest locations in emerging economies, as Bulgaria and Romania. The last ones offer a variety of decent services at affordable costs for large category of people. The low cost involves better management of the resources, which aims to reduce the waste and preserving the appearance of plenty. This paper presents a computer-based solution that allows tourists monitoring within a resort and provides some useful online functions as well as offline functions. The solution we propose relies on available technologies, such as RFID tags and readers, database management systems and computer based communication systems.

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1. Introduction

Some authors define the All-inclusive tourist packs as being standard offers, of a controlled quality, repeatable, that include two or more elements of transport, accommodation, meals, access to the tourist objectives, other facilities and services (for instance the travel insurances) (Bowen, 2001).

By using such a system, you can significantly reduce, on one hand the difficulties of organizing a holiday on your own, on the other hand, from the point of view of a tourist unity manager, we can reduce the customers' complaints, as long as these ones are informed about the contents of the purchased tourist pack.

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Concerning the application of the all-inclusive system, we could notice that it can be used for different target groups, like: couples, single persons, families, young people and old people.

2. Background

The interest for monitoring people activities is not very recent. In the early 20th century, in industrialized countries, the workers used punched cards to record the entry and exit times from factory. More recently, with the development of information technology, the punched cards were replaced by magnetic cards or other similar devices that can identify the person who owns them. These devices are also used to grant access in different areas of the factory or institution. They are very common in universities, in research institution, in hospitals, where are used to restrict the staff access to certain areas, depending on the permissions of each member. Because the devices used for identification can be lost, stolen or transferred to other persons, in critical situations they are replaced by biometric identification techniques, which are more secure but more sophisticated and more expensive.

3. The all-inclusive system in the scientific literature

According to Valhouli (2003), the popularity of the all-inclusive system is based on two basical aspects, more exactly: the time and the reached value.

Tourists do not want to spend the time calculating the probable costs associated to the planned holiday and, in the same time, tourists have expectations related to satisfying their exigencies. As a consequence, the most attractive aspect of the all-inclusive system is that the relation between the obtained services quality and the costs is in the tourist's advantage.

Aichholzer (2003), taking into consideration the future expectations, respectively the trends concerning the e-tourism services, appreciated that in the future it would exist an increase of the number of persons with over average incomes, but with less and less time resources, and in this way people will tend to prefer those services that attenuate the stress of the activities of planning a holiday. Taking into account all these aspects, the author considers that the all-inclusive system will register a more and more important demand, especially by the electronic commerce.

In the survey realised by Wong and Kwong (2004) the authors established, regarding the Hong Kong tourists, what are the main criteria applied by these ones concerning the choice of the all-inclusive system for the holidays spent abroad. In this research, were registered the points of view of 280 tourists related to 30 criteria, considered to be the most important in choosing the all-inclusive system. The results have indicated that the security and the guarantee of the accommodation would be the main two criteria that the tourist have in view. The advertising spots and the TV programmes with tourist theme were pointed out to be the criteria that have the least significance for the tourists included in this survey.

According to a survey, presented by Çiftçi (2007), 52% of the tourists originar form USA prefer to go in holiday using the all-inclusive system. The main reason for this practice is the tourists'desire to eliminate stress regarding the organizational part of a holiday, especially regarding the detail aspects. In other words, the reasons for which they prefer the all-inclusive system is the guarantee offered to obtain everything to a fixed price. More exactly, this system eliminates the unexpected expenses from the trip budget of a family. In general, the expenses for any type of food or drinks, relaxing activites, sports activities and other similar expenses are included into a fixed price.

4. The goal of the system

The aim of the proposed system is to provide certain useful functions that can be classified in two categories: online (or real-time) functions and offline functions. The available online functions are:
- Establishes whether a guest belongs or not to the resort and signals in case of failure;
- Establishes whether a guest accesses the services only during the valid staying and signals the attempts out of the period;
- Establishes whether tourists accesses the services they paid for and signals the attempts to access extra services;
- Establishes whether tourists try to use a service outside of its availability.