Marketing communications as a strategic function of the hotel units in the Zálesí a.s. company

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ABSTRAKT

Cílem této bakalářské práce je zhodnotit současnou úroveň marketingové komunikace vybraného podniku a jeho hlavních konkurentů a na základě analýzy navrhnout možná zlepšení. Práce je rozdělena na teoretickou a praktickou část. Teoretická část pojednává o důležitosti marketingové komunikace, popisuje jednotlivé nástroje komunikačního mixu, postup při realizaci marketingové strategie a využití internetu pro reklamu. V praktické části je krátce představen vybraný podnik. V hlavní části je pak analyzována a hodnocena úroveň marketingové komunikace vybraného podniku a jeho konkurentů. Závěrečná část obsahuje možné návrhy na zlepšení současné marketingové komunikace podniku.

Klíčová slova: Integrovaná marketingová komunikace, komunikační mix, reklama, osobní prodej, vztahy s veřejností, přímý marketing, podpora prodeje, segmentace trhu, cílení, umístění, E-marketing

ABSTRACT

The aim of this bachelor thesis is to evaluate the current level of marketing communications of selected company and its main rivals, and suggest possible improving measures on the basis of the results of marketing communications analysis. The thesis is divided into two parts - theory and analysis. The former part deals with the importance of marketing communications, the elements of marketing mix, the individual steps within realization of communications strategies, and finally the use of the internet as an advertising medium. In the latter part there is a short introduction of the selected company. The core part deals with the analysis and evaluation of marketing communications of the selected company and its competitors. Finally there are few improvement suggestions.

Keywords: Integrated marketing communications, communications mix, advertising, personal selling, public relation, direct marketing, sales promotion, market segmentation, targeting, positioning, E-marketing

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY
I hereby declare that the work presented in this thesis is my own and certify that an secondary material used has been acknowledged in the text and listed in the bibliography.
March 1, 2009

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INTRODUCTION

The core topic of this bachelor thesis is the analysis of marketing communications of the chosen company. It is very difficult to prevail against the rivals in current strong competitive environment. Competitive pressures are increasingly stronger and there are more and more exacting customers. The principal aim of each company is to have a dominant market position and ensure a long-term prosperity. To reach these goals, the company (among other things) uses marketing communications and optimal combination of particular elements of communications mix. This is called integrated marketing communications. It combines all instruments of the mix to create complex and interconnected unit. By this way the synergic effect is reached, and the resulting communication effort becomes homogenous. (De Pelsmacker et al. 2007, 8)

As De Pelsmacker, Geuens, and Van den Bergh state, the integration of the instruments of marketing mix is crucial for good marketing strategy. Integrated marketing communications have been an area of interest of companies for decades. However, the integration of the various instruments of the communication mix is influenced by a number of important trends in marketing today. (De Pelsmacker et al. 2007, 2)

I have chosen to analyse marketing communications of the Zálesí a.s company. This company is involved in quite a wide range of business activities including operating of two hotels Zálesí and Pohoda. Proper marketing communications are vital for these units to win upon new customers and maintain the current ones.

The goal of my bachelor thesis is to evaluate the existing marketing communications in the hotel units of the Zálesí a.s. company, analyse marketing communications of competitors and propose some improving measures.

The thesis is divided into theoretical and analytical section. The former section deals with the principle of marketing communications and the individual elements of communications mix: advertising, personal selling, public relations, direct marketing and sales promotion. The following part is dedicated to the description of particular steps within a process of strategic marketing planning. The last part of theoretical section deals with the nowadays increasing trend - E-marketing. The latter section of my bachelor thesis focuses on brief description of selected company and its marketing communications analysis. I will use SWOT analysis to determine strengths and weaknesses of the marketing communications of the company. Then I will describe marketing communications of the

company's main rivals. Finally I will sum up all significant findings concerning the communications of the hotels and list some improvement suggestions.

I. THEORY

1 MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

1.1 Marketing communications as a part of the marketing mix

Before explaining particular definitions relating directly to marketing communications I should first clarify the definition of the world marketing as such.

Kotler and Armstrong in their publication explain that marketing deals with identifying and meeting human and social needs, and they mention one of the simplest definitions of marketing: Marketing is managing profitable customer relationship. (Armstrong and Kotler 2005, 5)

They mention that marketing should not be seen only as a process of selling and advertising, because they are only a tip of the marketing iceberg. Marketing must be understood in the sense of satisfying customer needs. They define marketing as "a social and managerial process by which individual and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging value with others. In a business setting, marketing involves building and managing profitable exchange relationship with customers." (Armstrong and Kotler 2005, 6)

Marketing communications are an important factor of marketing functioning, or more precisely, it is a part of marketer's tools known as marketing mix. These tools are divided into 4 categories, called 4P - the product, price, place of distribution, and finally promotion, which is the most visible instrument of marketing communications. Through this instrument the company communicates with its target groups to promote its products. (De Pelsmacker et al. 2007, 2)

Kurtz and Boon explain the connection of promotion or marketing communications and integrated marketing communications (IMC):

Promotion is defined as communication link between buyers and sellers. It is a function of informing, persuading and influencing a consumer's purchase decision.

Marketing communications are messages dealing with buyer-seller relationships using mass media, such as TV, radio, magazines, direct mail, and the Internet. Each massage that customer receive from any source represents the company.

The term **Integrated marketing communications** is explained as coordination of all promotional activities in order to get maximum total impact of these massages. (Kurtz and Boone 2006, 482)

1.2 Integrated marketing communications

As I have mentioned above, the term integrated marketing communications means "coordination". It does not include only marketer but also other organizational units that interact with the consumer. Kurtz and Bone bring on the idea that customer is the key factor of integrated marketing communications. It is not the organization's goods and services that an IMC strategy begins with, but consumers' wants and needs are the initiatives and than it works in reverse to the product, brand, or organization. (Kurtz and Boone 2006, 483)

"Integrated marketing communication is a customer-centric, data-driven method of communicating with consumers. IMC-the management of all organized communications to build positive relationships with customers and other stakeholders-stresses marketing to the individual by understanding needs, motivations, attitudes and behaviours." (JIMC)

Integrated marketing communications is a trend nowadays. All the definitions include the same idea: "Communications instrument that traditionally have been used independently of each other are combined in such a way that a synergetic effect is reached and the resulting communications effort becomes seamless or homogenous." (De Pelsmacker et al. 2007, 8)

According to De Pelsmacker, Geuens and Van den Berg, it is important to realize the customer point of view. Customers are not usually experts in marketing so they do not distinguish between particular units of IMC; they see the campaign just as a way to persuade the consumers. That is way the customer's point of view is important to consider. (De Pelsmacker et al. 2007, 8)

From the following table is understandable the reason for integrated marketing communications. It is much more personalized, customer orientated, relationship based and interactive.

Table 1: Classical versus Integrated communications (De Pelsmacker et al. 2007, 11)

Classical communications Integrated communications Aimed at acquisition Aimed at retention, relationship management Mass communication Selective communication Monologue Dialogue Information in sent Information in request Information provision Information-self service Receivers take initiative Sender takes initiative Persuasive 'hold up' Provide information Effect through repetition Effect through relevance Offensive Defensive Hard sell Soft sell Salience of brand Confidence in brand Transaction-oriented Relationship-oriented Attitude change Satisfaction Modern: linear, massive Postmodern: cyclical, fragmented

1.3 The communications mix

Advertising is often considered a synonym of marketing communications, however, as De Pelsmacker, Geuens and Van den Berg explain in their publication, the reason for this fact is just that advertising is the most visible tool. (De Pelsmacker et al. 2007, 5)

Very nice explanation can be found in the book of Moriarty, Mitchell and Wells: "Advertising can cause you to stop and watch, or even stop and thing. It can make you laugh, or squirm in your seat, or bring tears to your eyes. It can inspire you to read about a new product or remember a favourite brand when you're walking down the aisle in a supermarket. Advertising can also leave you free to change the channel or turn a page without being aware of having seen the ad at all." (Moriarty, Mitchell and Wells 2008, 25)

Together with advertising other tools exist. These are five known elements of promotional mix.

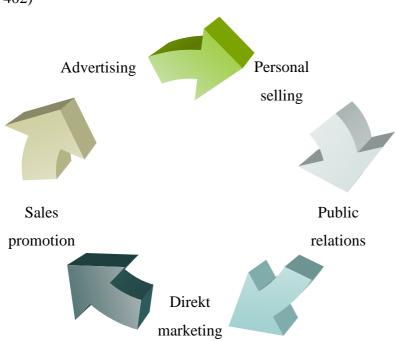


Figure 1: **Carefully blended mix of promotional tools** (Armstrong and Kotler 2005, 402)

1.3.1 Advertising

Advertising can be seen as message send to someone through media (as newspapers, television, radio, magazines and billboards) in hope that the receiver will react in certain way. (Moriarty, Mitchell and Wells 2008, 53) It is a mass media method of non-personal communication that can reach masses of geographically dispersed buyers at the lowest cost per head. However advertising can have some disadvantages. As it is only a one-way communication with the audience, they are not force to pay attention or respond. (Armstrong and Kotler 2005, 404) It is also non-personal, which means it is not directed to a specific person so it may not be as persuasive as salespeople. Although, according to Moriarty, Mitchell and Wells, this characteristic is changing thanks to internet and more interactive types of media. (Moriarty, Mitchell and Wells 2008, 55)

1.3.2 Personal selling

Personal selling means personal interaction between two or more people. It is the most effective and two-way communications tool that involves face-to-face contact (except of telephone selling). It is used to establish or maintain a long-term relationship with the customer, or persuade specific members of some audience. (De Pelsmacker et al. 2007,

464) Thanks to personal contact with the customer you can identify his or her needs and characteristics and make quick adjustments.

Nevertheless, also personal selling has some disadvantages. A sales force requires a long-term commitment than does advertising, and it is also company's most expensive promotion tool. (Armstrong and Kotler 2005, 404)

1.3.3 Public relations

Public could be defined as a group of people that the company tries to have a good relationship with, because they could be vital to the company's survival and success, since public means the general public, investors, shareholders, employees, partners, competitors and the government. Public relations are a communications tool used to promote the goodwill of a particular company. (De Pelsmacker et al. 2007, 291) Public relations tools include press and media releases, lobbying, charitable and public events, advertorials, financial reports, promotional collateral, facility tours, sponsorships, interviews and any other method for the promotion of a positive image to people. (Sales-And-Marketing-For-You)

1.3.4 Direct marketing

The aim of direct marketing, according to Kurtz and Boone, is to prompt consumers to take action in form either of placing an order, requesting information, or responding to an email message. (Kurtz and Boone 2006, 500-501)

There are many forms of direct marketing. Armstrong and Kotler found for all of them these distinctive characteristics: Direct marketing is non-public (the message is directed to some specific person); it is immediate and customized (the preparation of the massage that can be thereto adjusted to specific consumer, is quick). Direct marketing is also interactive (dialogue between the marketing team and the consumer; the form of massages depends on the customer's response). (Armstrong and Kotler 2005, 405)

Different media forms of direct marketing, as direct mail, catalogues, telemarketing, broadcast channels, and electronic direct marketing channels are described by Kurtz and Boone (2006, 500-504).

1.3.5 Sales promotion

Sales promotion refers to wide group of tools in form purchase incentives that the company provides its customer with. It can include free goods or services, coupons, contest,

vouchers, gifts and prizes, discounts, samples, financial incentives, charitable promotions and any other value-add over and above your standard product or services. (Sales-And-Marketing-For-You) These unique qualities attract consumer's attention and invite and reward quick response. As Armstrong and Kotler nicely explain: Advertising says: "Buy our product," sales promotion says, "Buy it now." As a disadvantage of sales promotion could be mention the fact that its effects are often short-lived and are not as effective in building long-run brand preference as advertising and personal selling. (Armstrong and Kotler 2005, 404)

As mentioned in each part of communications mix, the message used to persuade potential consumer is addressed either to certain known person, which is done individually, or it can be addressed through mass media to a number of receivers who can not be identified. The first case is called personal communication and the second one is mass communication. The following table serves as illustration of main differences between these to forms. (De Pelsmacker et al. 2007, 5)

Table 2: **Personal versus mass marketing communication** (De Pelsmacker et al. 2007, 6)

		Mass
	Personal communication	communication
Reach of big audience		
• Speed	➤ Slow (selling), faster (DM)	> Fast
• Costs/reached person	> High	➤ Low
Influence on individual		
• Attention value	➤ High	➤ Low
• Selective perception	Relatively lower	High
 Comprehension 	➢ High	Moderate-
		low
Feedback		
 Direction 	> Two-way	One-way
• Speed of feedback	➤ High	> Low
 Measuring 	Accurate	Difficult
effectiveness		

The authors also add that the practical implication of the selection mix depend on the situation, implementation and execution of the communication instruments.

1.4 Promotional strategies

There are two basic promotion mix strategies that the marketers can choose from.

Pulling strategy

Through this effort the seller tries to induce the potential consumer to buy a product. The main aim is to stimulate final-user demand. It is primarily advertising and sales promotion that contributes to this strategy. (Kurtz and Boone 2006, 507)

If this strategy is effective consumers will ask their retailers for the product, the retailers will then ask wholesalers (both groups are so-called channel members) and they will then demand it from the producer. Thus, under this strategy, consumer demand "pulls" the product through the channels. (Armstrong and Kotler 2005, 405)

Pushing strategy

This type of strategy involves "pushing" the product through the distributions channels to final consumers. The main tools of pushing strategy are primarily personal selling and trade promotion. (Armstrong and Kotler 2005, 405)

In case of pushing strategy, promotional effort is directed to members of marketing channels rather than final user. (Kurtz and Boone 2006, 507) The producer promotes his product to wholesalers, who promote to retailers, and finally the retailers promote to consumers. (Armstrong and Kotler 2005, 405)

1.5 Communications strategies

Marketing communications strategy is changing as the company can not always predict which of the elements of the mix will prove most successful. The entire implementation process is difficult since it requires careful planning, monitoring and adjustment to achieve the best results. (Sales-And-Marketing-For-You)

There are few steps to take in a process of good strategic marketing planning: to study the market needs and to analyse the situation of current and future market conditions. Both of these steps can ne done by SWOT analysis, which is the process of identifying strengths and weaknesses of the company (internal analysis) and opportunities and threats (external analysis).

Each market has different groups of customers with different needs and interest. Marketers must identify these groups and decide at which group to target their communication effort since it is the major stint of communication planning.

According to De Pelsmacker, Geuens and Van den Berg, the cornerstone of strategic marketing plan as well as of communications strategy is the process of segmenting the market, deciding on target groups, and establishing a position to defend these groups.

"The choice of well-defined target groups and positioning decision should, later in the communications planning, be reflected in the selection of communications objectives, communication instruments, campaign execution and media planning." (De Pelsmacker et al. 2007, 119)

1.5.1 Market segmentation

As I have already mentioned, customers can be divided into different groups with their own desires and needs. Through the process of segmentation the companies are able to identify the group of their potential customers whom they are able to understand and satisfy their needs.

De Pelsmacker, Geuens and Van den Berg define this process as "the process of dividing customers into homogenous groups" that share needs and react in similar way to communications efforts. (De Pelsmacker et al. 2007, 120)

The segmentation can be done by various bases with the business and customer markets being segmented differently as described below: (NetMBA, Business Knowledge Center)

1. Customer market segmentation

a. Geographic Segmentation is done mainly by considering of these variables: region, size of metropolitan area, population density and climate.

The home of potential customer and cultural differences are really important to consider since they are the reason for consumer behaviour and buying patterns. The companies might therefore have to consider other marketing mix approaches according to place where consumers live. (De Pelsmacker et al. 2007, 121)

- b.Demographic Segmentation variables include: age, gender, family size, income, occupation, education, ethnicity, nationality, religion, social class (NetMBA, Business Knowledge Center).
- c. Psychographic Segmentation includes: values, attitudes, and lifestyle.
- d.Behavioural Segmentation is based on customer behaviour toward products and includes following variables: usage rate and patterns, price sensitivity, brand loyalty, and benefits sought. (NetMBA, Business Knowledge Center)

2. <u>Business market segmentation</u>

Industrial customers tend to be fewer in number and purchase larger quantities. Characteristics for segmentation according to MBA could be:

- a. Geographic segmentation is based on variables such as customer concentration, regional industrial growth rate, and international macroeconomic factors.
- b. Customer type is based on factors such as the size of the organization, its industry, position in the value chain, etc.
- Buyer behaviour could be based on factors such as loyalty to suppliers, usage patterns, and order size. (QuickMBA, Knowledge to Power your Business)

For segmentation to be effective the companies have to make sure that it is

- Measurable
- Substantial- to be profitable
- Accessible
- Different in its response to a marketing mix
- Durable

 the segments should be stable (QuickMBA, Knowledge to Power your Business)

1.5.2 Targeting

The company must decide which segments are most attractive for it and how many of them it will target. (De Pelsmacker et al. 2007, 131)

A target market is a set of buyers that share common need or characteristics that the company decides to serve. (Armstrong and Kotler 2005, 199)

Armstrong and Kotler describe the process of evaluation of segments in which companies should focus on these three factors:

- 1. Segment size and growth
- 2. Segment structural Attractiveness it may be less attractive if it already contains many strong and aggressive competitors
- 3. Company objectives and resources the company must consider whether it has appropriate skills and resources needed to success in particular segment (Armstrong and Kotler 2005, 199)

There are five types of targeting strategies according to De Pelsmacker, Geuens and Van den Berg.

- 1. Concentration on one segment a company chooses one product for one market
- 2. Selective specialization a company chooses many segments that are attractive
- 3. Product specialization one product is sold to different segments
- 4. Market specialization different products sold to one group of customers
- 5. Full market coverage all segments are targeted with all products they need (De Pelsmacker et al. 2007, 132)

1.5.3 Positioning

"A product's position is the way the product is defined by consumers on important attributes-the place the product occupies in consumers' minds relative to competing products." The company must consider what position it wants to take in targeted segments. (Armstrong and Kotler 2005, 207-208)

Positioning Maps

Positioning maps helps marketers in planning their positioning strategies. Thanks to mapping they are able to find out consumers' perception o their brand and how consumers perceive competitors' products. (Armstrong and Kotler 2005, 207-208)

Positioning strategies

According to Armstrong and Kotler the positioning task consist of three steps:

- 1. Identifying a set of possible competitive advantage: "competitive advantage is an advantage over competitors gained by offering consumers greater value, either through lower prices or by providing more benefits that justify higher prices."
- 2. Choosing the right competitive advantage
- 3. Selecting an overall positioning strategy.

The firm must then be effective while communicating and delivering the position to the market. (Armstrong and Kotler 2005, 207-209)

There are number of positioning strategies that marketers follow to differentiate their offer from the others' and to create promotion that communicate the desired position:

- 1. Attributes What is special about the product's attributes
- Price/Quality Offering the same or better quality at a lower price than competitors (De Pelsmacker et al. 2007, 135)
- 3. Competitors Positioning against competitor
- 4. Application Whirlpool wants to "Wash your world clean"
- 5. Product user Identifying specific group of users
- 6. Product class Comparing to different classes (Kurtz and Boone 2006, 309)

"Developing, monitoring and adapting an appropriate position for a brand, a product or a company is a crucial prerequisite for effective marketing communication." (De Pelsmacker et al. 2007, 139)

2 E-MARKETING

The Internet, linked system of international computer networks, can powerfully leverage the ability to find, manage, and share information. Never before in human history has such a valuable resource been available to so many people at such little cost. (Living internet)

Nowadays the internet is an integral part of communication within and among the companies. The usage of internet has increased rapidly and I think it has become necessity for doing business.

"The Internet is a versatile tool to the extent that it can be used for different communication channels in the integrated marketing communication." (BNET)

According to De Pelsmacker, Geuens and Van den Bergh each communications tool described in one of the previous section has an on-line twin. For example traditional direct marketing could be replaced by cheaper version - building a direct line with customers and prospects through users' e-mail addresses, or other example: thanks to mobile communication companies can use wireless advertising to reach their target groups. (De Pelsmacker et al. 2007, 496)

2.1 Forms of online advertising

Internet advertising can be delivered as a standard ad, or it can be presented in a number of formats on Websites. The most known are **banner ads**, small ads on the Web pages on which people can click to move to the advertised Website. Other common formats are **skyscrapers** (skinny format along the right or left side of a Website), **pop-ups or pop-behinds** (sometimes seen as an annoying formats they appear on top or behind the opened Web site), **minisites** (format that gets high click rate allow advertisers to market their product without sending people away from the visited site), **superstitials** (these animation appears in a window whenever a visitor of a Website opens another page), and **widgets** (news, notes, calculators, weather feeds, clocks, books or music covers; they allow people to create and insert professional looking content into their Web sites). (Moriarty et al. 2008, 336-338)

2.2 Viral marketing

Viral marketing is a set of methods used to promote the brand product by urging brand users and lovers who are put to work to spread the word about the brand by using e-mail, SMS or other referral tools or web sites. (De Pelsmacker et al. 2007, 503)

2.3 E-Marketing Domains

The four major marketing domains are described by Armstrong and Kotler: (2005, 487-492)

2.3.1 B2C (Business to Consumer)

B2C means selling goods and services online to final consumer. Thanks to B2C Websites consumers can by online almost everything. They can seek information about differences of products quickly, however, consumers find the Internet less useful when buying products that must be examined in advanced, consumers.

2.3.2 B2B (Business to Business)

To reach new customers, serve more effectively to current ones and obtain buying efficiencies and better prices, firms use B2B trading networks, auction sites, online product catalogues etc.

2.3.3 C2C (Consumer to Consumer)

The Internet provides an excellent means by which consumers can by or exchange goods directly with one another. For example, eBay or Amazon.com offer markets pace for selling almost everything.

2.3.4 C2B (Consumer to Business)

Thanks to the Internet it is easier for consumer to communicate with companies. Via Websites consumers can search out sellers, learn about their offers, initiate purchase and give feedback

In the theoretical part of my bachelor thesis I focused on the explanation of the most important definitions and terms relating to marketing communications including promotional mix. I pointed out how important part marketing communications take in the whole marketing process, and what the new term integrated marketing communications means. One part is dedicated to e-marketing since the internet is modern medium frequently used for promotion nowadays. The following part will show how all these findings are applied to the process of market segmentation, customers targeting, and managing successful marketing communications as a whole.

II. ANALYSIS

3 ZÁLESÍ COMPANY PROFILE

3.1 The basic information

The Zálesí company, based in Luhačovice, has a long tradition on the Czech market. It is involved in quite a wide range of business activities, both in production and service business. As for the organizational structure, the company is divided into factories and units securing manufacture, business, and administrative activities and services. Each organizational unit is headed by a director, who is at the same time a shareholder.

The company's core business activity is manufacturing of the laminate tubes for beauty, pharmaceutical and food industry. Other activities include manufacturing of the technical moulding for the car industry, mechanical engineering, trading activities, agriculture, and the injection moulding. The company also manufactures its own moulds for the injection moulding. Last but not least, the company provides tourists with accommodation services by operating two hotels which I will be concerned with later as analyzing its marketing communication activities. (Zálesí)

3.2 History of the company

The foundation stone was laid in 1950 when Collective farm was founded by peasant as the original company. Due to a new legislation after revolution the company became Collective ownership. The company's assets were divided among so-called entitled persons who could offer their shares as a part of fixed capital and thus join the company. Hereby, in 1993 13 of them set up a limited company Zálesí hiring all assets of the original Collective ownership. The limited company was transformed to Joint Stock Company in 2006. By virtue of decision made by the general meeting the parent company merged with its subsidiaries. (Company internal information)

3.3 Company objectives

The aim of the company and its employees is fulfilling of the motto: "Partner of confidence, confidence of the partnership." To reach this aim the company has adopted quality assurance system ISO 9001.

The priority concern of every employee is to satisfy customers' needs, try to maintain current customers and win upon new ones by virtue of the company's goodwill. (Company internal information)

4 HOTEL UNITS

Hotel Zálesí is modern three stars hotel situated in the city centre of Luhačovice. It provides its customers comfortable accommodation and all kind of services. Hotel Zálesí has its own relax centre that offers its customers all kind of therapies such as oxygen therapy, bubble baths, and inhalation of mineral spring Vincentka.

Hotel Pohoda is located in the immediate vicinity of Luhačovice, 20 minutes by foot from spa colonnade. Due to its location in quite urban neighbourhood near the Luhačovice reservoir this hotel is ideal choice for families. Hotel Pohoda thus targets mainly young couples with children who take advantage of a friendly atmosphere of this hotel and a beautiful nature that offers many possibilities for leisure time. This hotel also has its own relax centre that can bring release to both body and soul. (Zálesí)

4.1 Marketing communications analysis

There is no special unit in the Zálesí company. that would deal with marketing matters, whence it follows that neither the communication strategy nor the marketing strategy is directly defined for hotels Zálesí and Pohoda. The use of marketing communications seems to be managed mainly by the hotel manager and it is being carried out predominantly by the use of the internet.

4.1.1 SWOT analysis of hotels Zálesí and Pohoda

"SWOT analysis is a tool for auditing an organization and its environment. It is the first stage of planning and helps marketers to focus on key issues. SWOT stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Strengths and weaknesses are internal factors. Opportunities and threats are external factors." (Marketing teacher)

Strengths:

- Goodwill returning customers
- 2 different locations in the centre of spa city, quite urban neighbourhood
- Benefits for regular customers

Hotels Zálesí and Pohoda are of these units of the Zálesí company that have long tradition on the market. During the time of its functioning, hotels Zálesí and Pohoda have been able to gain many new customers who became regular ones.

The great advantage of hotels Zálesí and Pohoda is their location. Spa Luhačovice is a beautiful and very attractive tourist destination visited by lots of people. As already mentioned, one of the hotels is located right in the city centre, thus it is attractive for customers who appreciate city life with all its great opportunities for an entertainment. The other hotel is situated in quite neighbourhood of Luhačovice. Beautiful nature round the reservoir offers customers different kind of possibilities of how to spend their leisure time. To have these hotels situated in two different locations enables to target different kinds of customers. To satisfy their needs, hotels managers provide their customers with different kind of benefits and discounts in order to maintain these customers and ensure they will return in the future.

Weaknesses:

- Poor Website design
- Low capacity of relax centres
- Vacancies during off-season

Luhačovice is a beautiful tourist district, thus people who choose this city to spend their vacation here can choose from a number of accommodation facilities during whole year. These facilities offer different levels of services and wellness therapies. The competitors are hence really strong and often offer services in more modern premises. It is thus very important to be able to choose the right way to win upon and keep the customers.

The official Website of the company is available at: hotely.zalesi.cz/100.aktuality-last-minute/. (See appendix I)

The design of the Web pages is quite dissatisfactory at the first glance due to a lack of catchy pictures. What I find as a big disadvantage is the fact that the information is translated only into German. Even though Luhačovice is visited mainly by Germans many other foreigners come to see Luhačovice and having the pages translated into other languages may bring a chance of gaining new customers.

Compared to other hotels' Website the Website of Zálesí and Pohoda is very simple and uninteresting, however, it still gives all necessary information in the sections such as Last minute, Price list, Stays offer for 2009, Photo gallery, and also information of the city Luhačovice. Beside these sections placed on one side of the page, there is lack of some catchy pictures and distinctive features that could show the significance of this hotel and services it offers.

As far as the hotels occupancy, during high season the hotels are constantly full and they do not have any problems to fill vacancies. The summer lures many people to visit Luhačovice and despite all the possible accommodation facilities, hotels Zálesí and Pohoda have their regular customers and are also able to gain new ones to fill vacancies. The problem, however, regularly arise when the high season is over. During this time, October to March, both hotels lack customers. Thus, according to this fact, hotels should focus mainly on the time of off-season to try to change this situation. I will be dealing with this in the section Recommendation.

Opportunities:

- New potential customers
- Rise in the standard
- New types of special therapies

Hotels will always has a chance to win upon new customers because Wellness is becoming real trend nowadays, people care about their health more and more in these hectic days and Luhačovice is able to offer them all kind of mineral springs and health treatments. Realizing this fact and undertaking particular measures to satisfy customers needs is a key success factor.

The rise of services standard would be a new step to success. Hotels services are on good level; however, there is always something that can be improved. Providing of high services standard depends mainly on the employees. They must be trained in how to provide high-quality services. It includes also the ability to communicate with customers, to be friendly, and to be able to handle all possible grievances of customers successfully.

As mentioned both Zálesí and Pohoda run their own relax centre in which they offer their customers all kind of therapies. Many new wellness therapies both for men and women exist nowadays and these hotels should be informed of current trends and tailor all services and therapies to the needs of their customers.

Threats:

- Lack of support of tourism
- Located in competitive environment
- Impact of the economic crisis
- Dated facilities

To be operating at full capacity, the hotels need enough tourists to come to Luhačovice in the future. This requires the support of tourism. The city Luhačovice cares about the benefits of tourism and seeks to bring new tourist who ensure profit, so the support from the city is hopefully warranted.

As far as the dated facilities, the Zálesí company planned to sell the hotel Zálesí and use acquired resources together with EU subsidy for entire reconstruction of hotel Pohoda which was supposed to become luxurious four star wellness centre. This was seen as a significant step for the hotel Pohoda and for the company as a whole. Thanks to modern equipment and a high capacity relax centre the hotel would be able to provide its customer with more services in better quality which would mean influx of new groups of customers. This planned reconstruction had to be, unfortunately, postponed due to the economic crisis. The Zálesí company is, therefore, still operating two hotels in three stars category and struggles to survive in highly competitive environment. I suggest that the certain unfashionableness and the outmoded equipment should be recompensed by a friendly approach to the customers. The company could also take an advantage of this fact and present the hotels as the homely facilities that are not ostentatious.

The economic crisis is a thorny issue of these days. It has already had a quite strong impact also on the Zálesí company. The top management had to make redundant high number of employees and is still dealing with the crisis by undertaking several cost-cutting measures.

The results of SWOT analysis show the strengths of the hotels that should be exploited and weaknesses that must be eliminated in order to reach the success. The company should avoid the impact of threats and make the best out of the opportunities. It is crucial to take seriously the problem of vacancies during off-season and focus the effort to change this situation by choosing the right marketing communications tools.

Logo of the company



Figure 2: Logo of the Zálesí a.s. company

Hotels Zálesí and Pohoda, as the units of Zálesí a.s., use the official logo of the company. Yellow and green, official colours of the company, are used on their premises, all advertising brochures and leaflets, and even as background colours of their Web pages.

4.1.2 Customers

According to the hotel manager, within their marketing activities they target self payers, mainly families, seniors, and also individuals interested in their therapies or tourists who just drive through the city. They were also the first who started to offer special stays for teachers by advertising in the magazine for teachers.

The construction of the relax centres in 2003 enabled these hotels to target new groups of customers such as employers who send their employees to spend so called reconditioning week in Luhačovice, or employers who sponsor their employees' stays to enable them to relax.

4.1.3 Sales promotion

- Discounts
 - a. Early order: by reservation and payment
 - to 31.12. 2008 10% of total accommodation price
 - to 31.1.2009 5% of total accommodation price
 - b. For seniors visitor, who turns 55 years latest on the first day of accommodation 5% of total accommodation price
 - c. For families with children during spring and summer holiday 5% of total accommodation price
 - d. For newlyweds whose marriage certificate is not older then 6 months on the first day of accommodation 5% of total accommodation price

Benefits

- a. Off-season benefits such as one inhalation for free, visit of Aqua Park in Uherský Brod for free
- b. Welcome drink for everyone
- c. Spa waffles with nutty flavour for everyone
- d. For birthday person present for everyone who celebrates birthday during their stay

4.1.4 Direct marketing – e-mail marketing

Important marketing communications tool in these hotels is e-mail marketing. Hotels Zálesí and Pohoda connect with their customers by sending e-mails. Through this way they try to fill vacancies by offering their regular customers special discounts. This is useful especially during off-season.

4.1.5 Advertising

As mentioned before, the company does not have any specialist for marketing matters; they carry this out mainly by outsourcing. They employ, however, one graphic designer who designs leaflets and brochures for them. Such print media are available for free at the hotel receptions and in LUHA-info Information centre. (See appendixes II) Zálesí hotels also take part in number of trade fairs mainly in Prague, Brno and Bratislava. The main communication medium of these hotels is, however, the internet. Besides communicating with customers through their Website, they use banners, and Google AdWords to advertise their services.

According to the hotel manager, apart from gaining customers by offering the services at their Websites they manage this also through business partners. Here is a list of the most significant ones who notably contribute to the turnover:

- ČEDOK a.s. Praha
- Wellness Tour s.r.o.
- Cestovní kancelář TVOS Ladislav Tvarůžka
- Lázeňské pobyty s.r.o.
- CK PRESSBURG, s.r.o.
- Město Český Těšín
- STP v ČR, o.s.
- ČD Travel, s.r.o.
- VÍTKOVICE TOURS, s.r.o.
- Avicenum, s.r.o.

4.1.6 Budget for marketing

According to the economic manager, marketing plan is considered within the financial planning. The decision relating to investment in marketing communications is made from the previous experience. The Zálesí a.s. company estimates advertising costs when setting

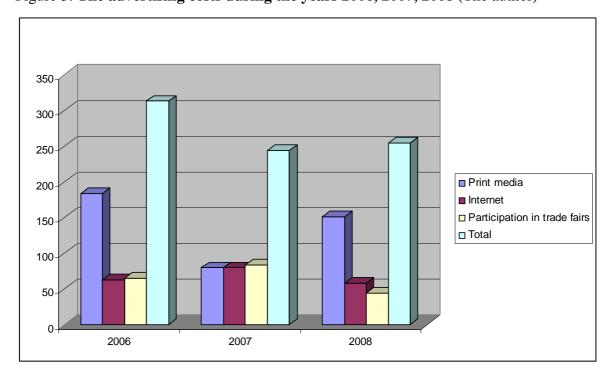
the budget and these costs can be modified over the year as necessary. The aim is to maintain optimal benefit-cost ratio.

The following table shows the costs for different kind of propagation during three years.

Table 3: The advertising costs during the years 2006, 2007, 2008 (Company internal information)

in CZK	2006	2007	2008
Printed matter	184 000	80 000	151 000
Internet	63 500	80 000	58 000
Participation in	65 500	84 000	45 000
trade fairs			
Total	313 000	244 000	254 000

Figure 3: The advertising costs during the years 2006, 2007, 2008 (The author)



The data in the table represent the cost for advertising of the hotels services. Each kind of propagation requires investment of different amount of money since the costs of advertising varies considerably for different types of media, so even though the company invested CZK 58 000,- into E-commerce which is less then the money invested in Print

media the Internet is still the most exploited medium for advertising and propagation of hotels services as they see it as the most effective way of connecting with the customers. According to this data, it appears to be the most optimal way in light of costs. As the CFO informed me, the costs for print media include all kind off printed matters produced within these years, including mainly leaflets and brochures. Even though they started to advertise their services in magazines for teachers in 2008, it is not really profitable for the company to advertise in other kind of magazines or newspapers since this kind of advertising appears to be too expensive.

From the table 3 it is evident that the company invested only CZK 45 000,- to the participation in trade fairs in 2008, which is even less then in the two previous years. Trade fairs offer great opportunity to gain new business partners or customers so I would definitely suggest investing more money and thus get the opportunity to strengthen brand awareness. I will specify this in the later section - Recommendation.

The total value shows that the costs fell from CZK 313 000,- in 2006 to CZK 254 000,- in 2008. The reason may be the external factors like varying price of particular means of advertising. Anyway, according to the hotel manager, the amount of money invested within each year was enough to ensure the full capacity of the hotel during high-season.

The following table shows that steady investments into advertising amounting to approximately 1% of the revenues is enough to meet the objective which is to fill hotels to capacity and thus achieve desired turnover.

Table 4: **Marketing costs to revenue ratio** (Own calculations based on company internal information)

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Revenues	21 885 386	23 984 409	23 959 445	27 441 221	30 398 737	31815981
Marketing costs	210 171	255 007	337 755	313 000	244 000	254 000
Marketing costs to	0,9603	1,0632	1,4097	1,1406	0,8027	0,7983
revenue ratio						

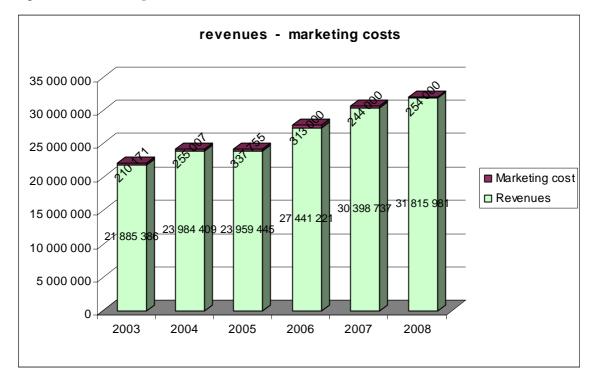


Figure 4: Marketing costs to revenue ratio (The author)

The figure 4 shows that it is enough for hotels to invest approximately 1% of the revenues to fill hotels to capacity during high-season. Company's top management dispense investing more money into marketing communications of the hotels, however, I do not regard this as a right decision since, even though they do not have any problems with high-season, during winter both hotels make less profit due to lack of customers.

In this part, focused on the analysis of marketing communications of Zálesí and Pohoda, I was able to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the marketing communications and identify what should the hotels concentrate their effort on in the future. As was found they are not in difficulties during high-season but the off-season ought to be the topic number one of any strategy discussions. I will focus on it later.

In the following section I will analyse marketing communications of the main rivals of Zálesí and Pohoda.

5 THE ANALYSIS OF MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS OF COMPETITORS OF HOTELS ZÁLESÍ AND POHODA

Both Hotel Zálesí and Hotel Pohoda are situated in strong competitive environment as Luhačovice is a popular spa town where many other accommodation facilities are available.

Luhačovice, the biggest Moravian spa and the 4th biggest spa in the Czech Republic, provides treatment for disorders in the respiratory system, digestive system diseases, diseases caused by metabolic disorders, defects of the musculoskeletal apparatus, circulatory system diseases, and carcinoma diseases. (Spa Luhačovice)

Luhačovice is well renowned mainly due to 16 sodium hydrocarbonate acidulous springs and one sulphurous spring that bubble forth on this territory.

Modern hotels, including Zálesí and Pohoda, offer a wide range of services and special stays for various groups of inhabitants. Beside hotel competitors there are also private accommodation providers. There are more then 15 hotel units in Luhačovice and the neighbourhood.

Table 5: The main competitors of hotel Zálesí and hotel Pohoda (The author)

Category				
***	**	****		
Hotel Litovel	Hotel Vltava	Hotel Miramare I. and II.		
Hotel Regia	Hotel Krystal	Vila Antoaneta		
The MORAVA Spa Hotel		The Jurkovičův dům		
		wellness hotel		
Spa house Niva I. and II.		Ambra wellness hotel		
Hotel Ogar		The PALACE Spa Hotel		
Hotel Adamantino		The ALPSKÁ RŮŽE Villa		
Hotel U Havlíčka		The DŮM B. SMETANY		
		Hotel		
Alexandria		The JESTŘABÍ Garni Hotel		
Hotel Fontána I. and II.				

According to hotel manager the biggest competitors of Hotel Zálesí and Hotel Pohoda are public company **Lázně Luhačovice** that drives most of the hotels mentioned in the **** category, **Spa Houses Niva I. and II.**, and **Hotel Miramare I. and II.** (Member of ROYAL SPA CLUB). In the following section I would like to compare these competitors in light of their Web Pages, since internet is the most important communication tool of these hotels, and also sales promotion presented on the Web sites of each hotel.

5.1 Lázně Luhačovice a.s.

The company Lázně Luhačovice a.s. is very strong competitor of the other hotels situated in Luhačovice since it owns the best known and luxurious accommodation facilities. However most of them belong to **** category which is not affordable for all the visitors, so they target different groups of customers then the category of hotels that Zálesí and Pohoda belong to.

5.1.1 Marketing communications analysis

Logo of the company



Figure 5: Logo of Lázně Luhačovice

Logo consisting of picture of mineral spring and the name of the company is known among visitors. It is simple an easy to remember.

Website

The company's official Website is available at www.lazneluhacovice.cz. (See appendix III) The first impression these pages give you is quite positive since everything is clearly organized and all information is available in 6 languages – Czech, English, German, Polish, Hungarian, and Russian – which is very useful since Luhačovice is a tourist district visited largely by foreign visitors, mainly Germans. Although it may seem these

translations are not as extensive as the Czech ones, they still provide the visitors with all the necessary information of any kind of stay, location, etc.

What I find very interesting and progressive is the virtual visit of some parts of spa centre, mostly The Jurkovičův dům wellness hotel which, built by known architect D. Jurkovič, is known as city's gem. However, this virtual visit is available just in the Czech version of this Website. There is the current offer of spa treatment for 2009 placed above the virtual visit right in the middle of the page since this offer is probably the reason for visiting this site.

In the column on the left side, there are clearly defined sections such as: Procedure list, What can we cure, Spa Hotels, Leisure time, Location and so important Reservation form.

Other feature the Czech and translated versions differ in is the section called Spa Hotels. In the Czech section there are all spa houses listed together with boarding houses, while in the translated version only hotel accommodations are available.

♣ Spa Hotels

One paragraph on the Website is dedicated to each hotel. Beginning with the initial catchy sentence it gives brief description of each facility. Even the sentence itself can give the potential customer the right idea what each hotel is like and what its main advantage is. Short photo gallery of the hotel is available underneath of each paragraph to capture customers' interest. The logos of the hotels together with the initial sentences are listed below.



Figure 6: Logo of The Jurkovičův dům wellness hotel

"A gem among our Spa Hotels, located in the heart of the spa's pedestrian zone, offering excellent convalescence opportunities in a stylish atmosphere."

A gem – this world give the visitors the right first impression. This hotel is very luxurious and it is probably the prettiest one in Luhačovice. The logo somehow shows the traditional style of D. Jurkovič's architecture. Of course the four stars can not be missing.



Figure 7: Logo of The PALACE Spa Hotel

"A first-class Spa Hotel with a unique complex offer of a whole spectrum of the latest spa procedures and services."



Figure 8: Logo of The DUM B. SMETANY Hotel

"A unique art nouveau style hotel, favoured due to its unique 1930s atmosphere."



Figure 9: Logo of The MORAVA Spa Hotel

"A traditional Spa Hotel offering a wide range of services under o ne roof, with a superb view of the most beautiful part of Luhačovice."



Figure 10: Logo of The JESTŘABÍ Garni Hotel

"The Garni Hotel, located in a quiet park, offers spa services in neighbouring spa facilities."



Figure 11: Logo of The ALPSKÁ RŮŽE Villa

"The Alpská růže Villa (The Alpine Rose Villa) offers a wonderful view of the park and is found in the peaceful centre of the spa not far from the colonnades and mineral springs."

Sales promotion

Lázně Luhačovice a.s. offer special stay for 2009. Each program includes special offer for different groups of people with different wants. Each offer is accompanied by some picture, list of services, initial sentence, possible bonuses, and short catchy description that is long enough for visitors to choose the suitable program to join.

Lázně Luhačovice provides their customers with several discounts:

- "At Spa treatment stays and the Luhačovice spa treatments in the minimum length of 3 weeks, you'll get a 25% discount for the third and any further week of your stay here in the winter and low season."
- "At Spa treatment stays and the Luhačovice spa treatments in the minimum length of **3 weeks**, you'll get a **40% discount** for the third and any further week of your stay here in the **high season**."
- They are partner of BONUS PROGRAM of Česká spořitelna, which can be useful for Czech customers.

All this bonuses are presented on the official Website as well as in the catalogue.

As I have mentioned above, another marketing communications tool of this company is providing its customers with catalogue of Spa treatment and Wellness which includes all important information that are available also on the internet. They have other printed matters such as leaflets and brochures available for free at the hotel reception. Their huge

billboards placed near the city carry either the slogan – "Luhačovice, one of the most beautiful spas", or a view of one of the hotels they own.

Lázně Luhačovice a.s. has completed an extensive reconstruction of some of their hotels in recent years by which they strengthened their attractiveness and thus the position on the market.

Lázně Luhačovice has great advantage due to brand awareness; it is known as a company providing their customers with all kind off services in stylish luxurious premises. The company carries the official name of the city. Whenever any possible visitor tries to google Luhačovice the company's Website is listed among the first in the result of organic search. As Luhačovice a.s. cooperate with number of business partners, the information above listed hotels is available also at some travel agencies' Websites, or at other Websites dealing with spa Luhačovice or accommodation, e.g.:

- http://www.penziony.cz/luhacovice/
- Travel agency Wellness Tour: http://www.wellnesstour.cz/wellness-lazneluhacovice.phtml
- http://www.hotel-ubytovani.com/hotely-penziony-Luhacovice.htm

5.2 Spa house Niva I. and II.

Spa Houses Niva I. and II. are, according to the Zálesí hotel manager, strong competitors of hotels Zálesí and Pohoda.

Spa Houses Niva I. and II., private healthcare institutions, are located in quiet urban neighbourhood of Luhačovice close to hotel Pohoda.

5.2.1 Marketing communications analysis



Figure 12: Logo of Spa houses Niva I. and II.

The official motto of Niva houses is: "Niva Spa houses, key to health."

Website

The official Website is available at www.niva.cz/english.html. (See appendix IV)

The information on the Website is translated into two languages – German and English – which should be matter of course of each hotel in such a touristic district. As far as the design of the Website, it is not as impressive as previously described Website of Lázně Luhačovice a.s.

The site is simply organized and structured. On the left side, there are sections such as Therapeutics, Leisure time, Interesting things, Gift vouchers, Reservation, and few others. Each section is accompanied by relating pictures which gives the visitors some idea of the hotel services. The first impression these pages gives you is not as positive as that of Lázně Luhačovice. The customer is provided with all important information about the types of stays and its prices, however, I feel this is not enough since in such a competitive environment you need more than that. It is crucial to catch the attention of new potential customers and give them as many superlatives as possible. To do so the properly designed Website, which is usually the first thing the customer gets in touch with when interested in mentioned hotel services, could be vital advantage. Besides the infelicitous background of the pages, the information about the price reduction and special offers presented on the Web in the English and German version is two years old. On the other hand they are rightly taking advantage of Niva houses location, which is near the Luhačovice reservoir, when listing several possibilities of how to spend free time. Thus in the section Leisure time the visitors can find possibilities how to spend time in close area of Niva hotels (fishing, horseride, zorbing, minigolf,...) or what the hotels itself offer (indoor and outdoor swimming pool, tennis, volleyball, mountain bicycle, dancing evenings,...) According to this section and some other indications it is obvious that these hotels target different groups of customers then the hotels owned by Lázně Luhačovice. Niva hotels are suitable mainly for families or couples, whilst Lázně Luhačovice targets more wealthy visitors and those interested mainly in spa treatments.

Unlike Hotels Zálesí and Pohoda, Niva houses offer stays both for self-payers and those whose stays are paid by insurance company. This enables them to target also other groups of customers.

4 Sales promotion

Spa houses Niva offer following discounts in the section services:

- Early order: by reservation and payment
 - to 31.1. 2009 10% of total accommodation price
 - to 28.2.2009 8% of total accommodation price
 - to 31.3.2009 5% of total accommodation price
- For seniors 5% of total accommodation price of total accommodation price (Senior = is older than 60 years latest on first day of accommodation)
- Special romantic weekend
- What I consider as a good way how to catch the customers' attention and gain more new customers is offering a gift vouchers:" Do you think about a gift to Birthday, wedding, anniversary, Christmas or just for your business friends? Give them our gift vouchers."



Figure 13: Gift voucher of Spa Houses Niva

Spa Houses Niva I. and II. have also their own brochures and leaflets available for their customers, however, their main promotion tool is the internet. When you search for accommodation in Luhačovice, Niva houses are the first in the result of organic search. They have their offers placed in some travel agencies and on several Web pages, e.g.:

• http://www.penziony.cz/luhacovice/

- Travel agency Wellness Tour: http://www.wellnesstour.cz/wellness-lazneluhacovice.phtml
- http://www.travelclubck.cz/ubytovani-cr-a-sr/ceska-republika/zlinsky-kraj/luhacovice-hotel-niva-i-ii/

5.3 Miramare I. and II.

Spa hotels Miramare are situated near the city centre. "The company Léčebné lázně Luhačovice - Sanatorium MIRAMARE ltd. has got three main interconnected buildings - Miramare I, Miramare II and Miramare-Helena and four villas Pernštýn, Petřín, Rita and Nasta." (Miramare, lázeňské hotely Luhačovice)

5.3.1 Marketing communications analysis



Figure 14: Logo of the Hotels Miramare I. and II.

♣ ROYAL SPA CLUB

The logo of Hotels Miramare carries the official symbol of ROYAL SPA CLUB as Miramare is its member. ROYAL SPA is a private chain of spa and wellness hotels. The name of this chain is derived from their credo which is to provide their customers with 'royal' care. They have four spa hotels and wellness hotel located in known spa resorts. All these establishments offer high quality services. (ROYAL SPA, spa hotels)

To become a member of this club, the customer only needs to fill-in a registration form at the reception desk. Each customer then receives one of the following types of cards:

STANDARD: card-holder visited the ROYAL SPA hotel at least once

SILVER: card-holder visited the ROYAL SPA hotels at least **6-times**

GOLD: card-holder visited the ROYAL SPA hotels at least 11-times



Figure 15: ROYAL SPA CLUB card

To be part of this chain is great advantage for Miramare. Not only is it a sign of high quality, but it also brings the Miramare's customers a wide range of discount and benefits as a reward for their loyalty. Moreover, as the ROYAL SPA CLUB is designed only for regular clients, to be part of this chain ensures Miramare more and more regular clientele.

Website

The official Website is available at www.miramare.luhacovice.cz. (See appendix V)

I find the hotel's Website as well-designed. The information available in Czech, English, German, and Russian is displayed on white background which makes it simple and lucid.

Logically organized Web pages include everything you need to know to register for stay in one of these hotels. However, like in the previous cases, the translated versions are not as detailed as the official Czech version.

There are sections as Sitemap, Treatment, Pricelist, Spa stays offer, Photo gallery and even video gallery is not missing. Each type of stay accompanied by pictures and price list is described in detail for customers to choose the most suitable one. The hotels offer types of stays such as Slimming cure, Anti-Stress Programme and even treatment for infertility. However, the last kind of treatment together with some other special offers and discounts is available only in the Czech version of their Website which may be seen as a disadvantage.

On the first page there are special offers including last minute stays and above standard procedures such as special kind of massages.

As a member of the previously discussed ROYAL SPA, one Miramare Web page is dedicated to ROYAL SPA CLUB, where all the important information, about how to become a member, what benefits it can bring, and where those discounts can be used, are

listed. Not only can the customers use the benefits in other ROYAL SPA establishments during their stays, but they have also discounts in number of shops, restaurants, chemists, etc.

4 Sales promotion

 Miramare hotels offer gift vouchers in different value for their Czech customers as an ideal gift for relatives, friends or business partners.



Figure 16: One of the Miramare Gift vouchers

Miramare have all kind of special offers and discounts:

- To 26.4.2009 Wellness weekend, 4 days of massages and relax, Spa relax for a low season price
- To 26.4.2009 Wellness program, Program for seniors, Prevention of civilization diseases – 10% of price
- 4.1.-28.2.2009 and 1.11-20.12.2009 **7=6** one week stay for a price for 6 days
- 4.1-25.4.2009 and 4.10.-20.12.2009 14=12 two-week stay for a price for 12 days, 21=18 three-week stay for a price for 18 days, 28=24 four-week stay for a price for 24 days
- 26.4-3.10.2009 **14=13** two-week stay for a price for 32 days, **21=19** three-week stay for a price for 19 days, **28=25** four-week stay for a price for 25 days

Miramare offers their services at many other Websites:

- Above all: Royal Spa chain: http://www.royalspa.cz/en/page/100.recent-events/
- http://www.spa.cz/lazne-luhacovice/
- Travel agency Wellness Tour: http://www.wellnesstour.cz/wellness-lazne-luhacovice.phtml

Spa and wellness hotel Miramare is very known among customers as a high –class hotel that is constantly visited by many famous personalities. They even won a PRICE OF THE YEAR 2007 as a best spa hotel for year 2007 in the Czech Republic.



Figure 17: Price of the year 2007

This section was dedicated to marketing communications analysis of the hotels' biggest rivals. I described the promotion tools they use, identified differences between marketing communications tools, and finally found out the strengths and weaknesses in light of marketing communications.

In the last part of my thesis, I will recommend few possible steps that would help to meet the objectives of both hotels. This recommendation will be based on my findings.

6 RECOMMENDATION

Marketing communications of any hotel can be defined as sufficient if they contribute considerably to meet the objective of every hotel, which is to fill the hotel to capacity. Both hotel Zálesí and Pohoda are able to fulfil this goal by using appropriate marketing communications tools, however, as I have mentioned several times, it is important to differentiate between high-season when the hotels operate at full capacity, and off-season when they lack customers.

The current economic crisis can be the cause of a decline of demand for services. The hotels must, hence, follow current trends and shape its offers according to customers' requirements. It is crucial to keep in touch with customers and let them know through different kinds of benefits that their loyalty is appreciated.

In this section I will first suggest some improvement measures considering advertising tools and then I will focus on solving the problem with vacancies during winter.

6.1 Advertising

Hotels provide their customers with all kind of printed matters such as leaflets and brochures, into which I recommend to insert copies in other languages as well as information about the city Luhačovice, natural sanctuaries, cultural relics, and also information about coming events. Besides German, I would recommend translating all this information also into English, Russian and Polish.

Although the hotel manager argues that advertising in magazines and newspapers is too expensive mean of promotion, I would still suggest offering their services in special Wellness and health magazines.

Next recommendation would be to place billboards along the roads at the city entrance. This could be useful as hotels target also those people who are just passing through the city.

6.2 E-marketing, Website

Both hotels use mainly their official Website as a marketing tool to promote their services and inform about current discounts and special wellness therapies. The online advertising level is quite high. Zálesí a.s. uses banners, Google AdWords, and also direct e-mails to advertise its services and offer their customers all kind of benefits.

As far as the Website is concerned, I would recommend few improvements. From the design point of view, the background needs to be in lighter colour to make the information more lucid. I would also recommend adding more pictures to draw the customer's attention. I definitely suggest that the entire information should be translated not only into German but also into English, Russian and Polish.

To give the customers a chance to express their opinion and make possible suggestions I would recommend providing some space on the Website for this purpose. It would be a kind of an on-line feedback in the form of a questionnaire through which the hotel management would learn about the customers' appreciations and complaints and thus would be able to decide about new possible steps that could help meet all customers' needs.

The hotels should also start to regularly utilize Zlín region tourist information portal.

6.3 Customers

In such a competitive environment, it is important for the hotels to be able to diversify. Hotels must follow current trends and offer their customers the most attractive new therapies to win their interest.

If the execution of above described project on reconstruction of Pohoda takes place in the future, the hotels will target shorter list of customers by offering them unique services, some special additional services and modern therapies in luxurious relaxation centre. This strategy is not, however, convenient for current level of the hotels as they take for customer everyone who is willing to put up at the hotels. These customers are different age, nationality and education.

To gain new customers, the appropriate step would be to define the most profitable customer segments and suit the offers to them. Hotels have been already focusing on discounts for seniors, who are very profitable group mainly during 'critical' off-season. Retired people care much for their health. In these hectic days they start to be aware also of the importance of heartsease and thus wellness and health resorts are very popular nowadays. Hence it is obvious that targeting on this customer segment, and making a new effort to lure seniors to spend wellness holiday anytime throughout the year can help to fill the hotel to capacity also during off-season.

There is one more group of new potential customers. As hotel Zálesí has modern convention hall suitable for meetings and all kind of trainings, I would suggest taking an

advantage of it by offering companies a new kind of special stays during which they would have the convention hall at disposal all the time. These special two or three nights stays would include three kinds of wellness therapies, I would recommend mainly anti-stress therapy.

6.4 Participation in trade fairs

Hotel managers are aware of the fact that they are not able to fill these hotels to capacity from October to March so they provide their customers with several kinds of discounts during off-season which, however, still does not seem to be enough to change this situation.

I presume that trade fairs would be a great opportunity to help to improve the situation of off-season since through the participations in trade fairs the exhibitors get the chance to showcase and demonstrate their latest products and services. They can also study activities of their rivals, examine recent trends and learn about new opportunities.

As was found, Zálesí a.s. company invested only CZK 45 000,- in participation in trade fairs in 2008 and the total amount of money invested in propagation was only CZK 254 000,-.

In order to increase the hotels occupancy during off-season, I suggest investing more financial resources in advertising with focus on the targeted client segments, which are expected to be interested in hotels services also during off-season. Increasing of advertising expenditures by 100% would enable to participate in two trade fairs focused on these specific segments. I would recommend participating in the following trade fairs:

- FOR SENIORS This trade fair is arranged by ABF company specialized in organizing building trade fairs (ABF or Architect Building Fairs). It is the only specialized trade fair in the Czech Republic aimed at seniors. ABF is partner of the Capital city of Prague in the project whose objective is to create a modern Letňany exhibition centre in Prague, where are these trade fairs FOR SENIORS held. (FOR SENIOR)
- 2. Wellness Balnea This international trade fair for wellness, equipment, medical and rehabilitative technology, regeneration and spa is annually held in Prague trade fair area Letňany. (Wellness Balnea)

Figure 18: Calculation of minimum increase in revenues (ceteris paribus) necessary to cover the additional (100% increase) advertising expenditures (Own calculations based on company internal information)

CZK	Current situation				
Account class	2008	2007	2006		
Revenues from hotel services	31 815 981	30 398 737	27 441 221		
Advertising costs	254 000	244 000	313 000		
Profit of hotel units	2 985 543	2 393 265	1 629 442		
Revenue profitability	9,38	7,87	5,94		
Occupancy ratio	72,5%	72,0%	69,5%		
Revenues per occupancy					
(Revenues/Occupancy ratio)	438 841	422 205	394 838		
Profit per occupancy (Profit/Oc. r.)	41 180	33 240	23 445		
Minimum increase in revenues (ceteris paribus) necessary to cover the additional					
(100% increase) advertising expenditures.					
Increase in advertising costs	250 000	250 000	250 000		
Targeted occupancy (6 months 100%, 6					
months 70%)	85%	85%	85%		
Minimum occupancy increase required					
to cover the costs incurred (in % points)	6%	8%	11%		
Revenues for 85 % occupancy	37 301 494	35 887 398	33 561 206		
Revenues increase for 85 % occupancy					
in comparison to the current situation-					
(72 %)	5 485 514	5 488 661	6 119 985		
Profit increase for 85 % occupancy with					
current profitability	264 749	182 117	113 401		

The above table contains overview of revenues for 2006-2008, advertising costs incurred to fill the hotels to capacity and also profit obtained in 2006-2008.

Besides these financial indexes the table includes also hotel occupancy ratios during these three years.

The table also includes the minimum increase in the occupancy needed to cover the additional advertising expenditures incurred to fill the hotels to capacity during off-season. The required increase is calculated on the basis of above listed data.

If the company decides to increase the advertising costs by 100% (CZK 250 000,-), it will be necessary to increase the occupancy by at least 6 % to prevent possible decline in profit. If the occupancy increases by more then 6%, it would mean that the investments have already been effective, which will prove itself in a higher profit rate.

These calculations of the recovery of the amount of money invested in advertising are placed here only for orientation. It does not include the possible increment in fixed costs in case the occupation increases. It stems from the previous costs and achieved profitability that matches current occupancy.

Due to the current hotels economics, it is still necessary to consider every increase in costs in relation to profit and recovery of these costs, even though compared to the other costs the amount of advertising costs is low.

CONCLUSION

The aim of my bachelor thesis was to analyse marketing communications of the hotel units in the Zálesí company and its main rivals, and suggest some improvements.

In the theoretical part of the thesis, I hope I have collected sufficient information concerning marketing communications. To compile all the information, I have used predominantly specialized publications dealing with marketing communications.

In the practical part, I have applied the findings both on the hotel units in the Zálesí company and its main competitors. Firstly, I have analysed the marketing communications of hotels Zálesí and Pohoda. For this analysis I have mainly used the internal information of the company and also their official Website. To determine the current situation of the hotels' marketing communications, I have also used SWOT analysis that helped me identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of these hotels. I have listed and described marketing communications tools the hotels use to promote their services. The second part is dedicated to marketing communications analysis of the hotels' main competitors. On the basis of my analysis and the comparison of the communications of hotels Zálesí, Pohoda and its competitors, I found out that marketing communications of these hotels is efficient enough to fill both hotels to capacity during high-season despite of their location in strongly competitive environment. The problems, however, arise whenever high-season comes to an end. During this time both hotels lack customers until off-season is over. This situation thus requires undertaking some improvement measures.

Finally, in the last part of the thesis dealing with my own recommendations concerning the hotels' marketing communications, I have listed few possible improvement suggestions in advertising and proposed eventual steps of how to resolve the problem with vacancies during off-season. These steps are supported by a financial data.

I hope that my suggestions can inspire the company when deciding about the possible steps relating to marketing matters of hotels Zálesí and Pohoda.

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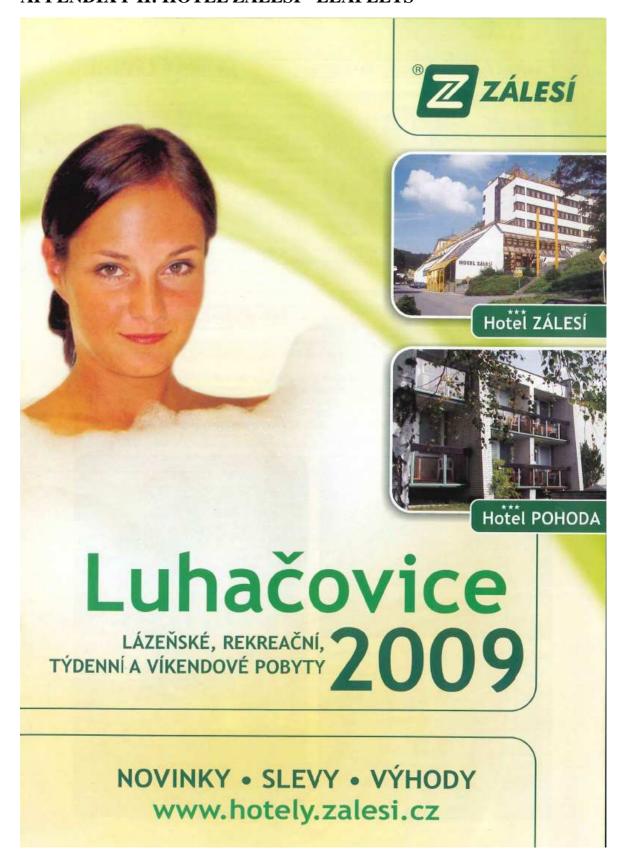
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APPENDIX P I: HOTELS ZÁLESÍ, POHODA – WEB SITE

česky - <u>deutsch</u> Nacházíte se zde: Last Minute • ZÁLESÍ LUHÁCOVICE Hotely ZÁLESÍ*** a POHODA*** > Last Minute Zasílání cenově výhodných nabídek na Váš e-mail Dámy a pánové, máte-li zájem dostávat naše aktuální cenově výhodné nabídky pohodlně do své e-mailové schránky, nechte nám svůj kontakt na zaslání Last Minute Aktuality Nabídka a ceny pobytů 2009 Slevy a zvýhodnění v roce 2009 Relaxační centra, popis lázeňských procedur Ceník procedur, sauny a fitness Ceník ubytování Popis Hotelu ZÁLESÍ *** Fotogalerie Hotelu ZÁLESÍ *** Popis Hotelu POHODA *** Fotogalerie Hotelu POHODA *** Objednávka pobytu Zaslání informací Lázně Luhačovice Luhačovice a volný čas Luhačovice <u>Kontakt</u> INFORMACE PRO VÁS! Máte zájem o pravidelné zasílání našich nabídek Last moment? Můžete ušetřit až 30% z ceny Vašeho týdenního nebo víkendového lázeňského pobytu. Vyplňte dole svoji E-mailovou adresu. 🕊 Duben 2009 🤒 Út St Čt Pá So 01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19

APPENDIX P II: HOTEL ZÁLESÍ - LEAFLETS





LUHAČOVICE

Vás zve do svých hotelů lädt Sie in ihre Hotels ein





www.hotely.zalesl.cz

Hotel ZÁLESÍ*** – Relaxační centrum www.hotely.zalesi.cz Ceník procedur a sauny 2007

Cenik procedur a sauny 20	007
Konzultace s lékařem	250,-
Suchá uhličitá koupel	240,-
Suchá uhličitá koupel	120,
Suchá uhličitá koupel (c/là loka - 3 procedu)	700,-
Kyslíková terapie (L procedura)	150,-
Kyslíková terapie (kaliki dalii procedur.)	100,-
Kyslíková terapie (cdi lilia - 5 procedu)	550,-
Inhalace minerální vody Vincentka	90,-
Slatinný obkład na celá záda	190,-
Slatinný obklad na krční nebo bederní páteř	100,-
Parafinový zábal	190,-
Parafinový zábal rukou	100,-
Bahenní zábal z Mrtvého moře – celkový	650,-
Bahenní zábal z Mrtvého moře – zad a paží	330,-
Bahenní zábal z Mrtvého moře – lokální	130,-
Masáž částečná	180,-
Masáž celková	490,-
Aromaterapeutická masáž částečná	240,-
Aromaterapeutická masáž celková	590,-
Reflexní lymfodrenáž částečná	200,-
Reflexní lymfodrenáž celková	490,-
Uvolňující masáž krční páteře	240,-
Reflexní masáž plosky nohy	200,-
Bodová masáž	200,-
Infračervená kabina	50,-
Sauna – 1 osoba	120,-/hod.
Sauna – 2 osoby	190,-/hod.
Sauna – 3 osoby	260,-/hod.
Sauna – 4 osoby	330,-/bod.

Ceny masáží a sauny jsou včetně prostěradla. Změna cen vyhrazena.

JARNÍ TÝDEN V LUHAČOVICÍCH!!!

Až 1.300,- Kč

ANTISTRESOVÝ POBYT v hotelu ZÁLESÍ ***

Termin: 25. 4. -2. 5., 26. 4. -3. 5., 2. 5. -9. 5. a 3. 5. -10. 5. 2009

Cena LAST MOMENT ve 2-lůžkovém pokoji:

6.440,- Kč

(původní cena 7.740,- Kč)

jednolůžkový pokoj: 7.700,- Kč

3. osoba na přistýlce: 5.740,- Kč, dítě do 15 let na přistýlce (bez procedur): 1.960,- Kč, do 5 let zdarma Cena zahrnuje: uvítací přípitek, 7x ubytování s polopenzí, 1x masáž lávovými kameny, 1x medová detoxikační masáž, 3x suchá uhličitá koupel, 3x kyslíková terapie, 1x slatinný obklad na celá záda, volný vstup do sauny

NAVÍC: 10% sleva na dokoupené procedury, lázeňské oplatky

BEAUTY POBYT (nejen) PRO ŽENY

v hotelu ZÁLESÍ ***

Termin: 25. 4. -2. 5., 26. 4. -3. 5., 2. 5. -9. 5. a 3. 5. -10. 5. 2009

Cena LAST MOMENT ve 2-lůžkovém pokoji:

6.210,- Kč

(původní cena 7.510,- Kč)

jednolůžkový pokoj: 7.470,- Kč

3. osoba na přistýlce: 5.510,- Kč, dítě do 15 let na přistýlce (bez procedur): 1.960,- Kč, do 5 let zdarma Cena zahrnuje: uvítací přípitek, 7x ubytování s polopenzí, 1x kosmetická lymfodrenáž obličeje, 1x parafínový zábal rukou, 1x uvolňující masáž krční páteře, 1x masáž lávovými kameny, 1x vstup do solné jeskyně, 1x kosmetické ošetření obličeje nebo kadeřník

NAVÍC: 10% sleva na dokoupené procedury, lázeňské oplatky

TÝDEN PRO BOLAVÁ ZÁDA v hotelu POHODA ***

Termin: 26, 4, -3, 5, 2, 5, -9, 5, a 3, 5, -10, 5, 2009

Cena LAST MOMENT ve 2-lůžkovém pokoji:

5.250,- Kč

jednolůžkový pokoj: 6.370,- Kč (původní cena 6.550,- Kč) 3. osoba na přistýlce: 4.480,- Kč, dítě do 15 let na přistýlce (bez procedur): 1.960,- Kč, do 5 let zdarma Cena zahrnuje: uvítací přípitek, 7x ubytování s polopenzí, 3x hydromasáž se zábalem, 1x aromaterapeutická masáž zad a šíje, 1x uvolňující masáž krční páteře, 2x infračervená kabina NAVÍC: 10% sleva na dokoupené procedury, lázeňské oplatky

JARNÍ POHLAZENÍ

SPECIÁLNÍ NABÍDKA

v hotelu POHODA ***

Termín: 26. 4. - 3. 5., 2. 5. - 9. 5. a 3. 5. - 10. 5. 2009

Cena LAST MOMENT ve 2-lůžkovém pokoji:

6.290,- Kč

(původní cena 7.590,- Kč)

jednolůžkový pokoj: 7.410,- Kč

3. osoba na přistýlce: 5.520,- Kč, dítě do 15 let na přistýlce (bez procedur): 1.960,- Kč, do 5 let zdarma Cena zahrnuje: uvítací přípitek, 7x ubytování s polopenzí, 1x čokoládová masáž se zábalem, 2x zábal z mořských řas, 2x lymfatická masáž baňkou, 2x suchá uhličitá koupel, 2x kyslíková terapie NAVÍC: 10% sleva na dokoupené procedury, lázeňské oplatky

Platnost nabídky: pro pobyty objednané od 8. dubna 2009 do obsazení vyhrazené kapacity. Kontakt: Zálesí a.s. Luhačovice, Hotel Zálesí ***, Zatloukalova 70, 763 26 Luhačovice tel.: 577 100 811, 577 100 812, Hotel Pohoda ***, Václavíkova 203, Luhačovice, tel. 577 131 115, 577 100 812 E-mail: hotely@zalesi.cz , www.hotely.zalesi.cz

APPENDIX P III: LÁZNĚ LUHAČOVICE A.S. – WEB SITE



APPENDIX P IV: SPA HOUSES NIVA – WEB SITE



zdravotnických pracovníků Vám nabízíme přes 40 druhů

Přijeďte, odpočiňte si a nechte se hýčkat! Věříme, že u

léčebných procedur.

APPENDIX P IV: MIRAMARE – WEB SITE

MIRAMARE LÁZEŇSKÉ HOTELY

česky - english - russian - deutsch



Navigace

Nacházíte se zde: Úvodní stránka

<u>Úvodní stránka</u>

Cenik

Lázeňský hotel MIRAMARE

Lázeňský hotel VILA ANTOANETA

Lázeňský hotel VILA VALAŠKA

Lázeňské pobyty

Krátkodobé pobyty

Speciální nabídka

Lázeňská léčba a procedury

Aktuality

Léčba neplodnosti

Rezervace pobytu

Royal Spa Club

Nepřehlédněte

Lázeňské pobyty Přijedte si odpočinout do našich lázní a vyberte si ze široké nabídky <u>lázeňských</u> pobytů, Nabídka je vytvořena tak, aby si vybral každý z Vás.

Nabídka lázeňských dárkových šeků

sekcu
Darujte Vašim blízkým něco pro zdraví.
Nabízíme Vám lázeňské šeky v našich
lázních v hodnokách 1.000 Kč, 2.000 Kč
a 5.000 Kč. Možnost objednat si
dárkovou poukázku máte i na určitý
typ lázeňského pobytu. <u>Dárkové</u>
poukázky

Vyhledávání

hledaný výraz...

LI. J.:



Lázeňské pobyty

Nabízíme Vám širokou škálu lázeňských a wellness pobytů, Jistě si vybere každý z Vás.



Krátkodobé pobyty

Využijte naší nabídku víkendových a dalších krátkodobých pobytů již od 2 250,- Kč.



Speciální nabídka

Vyberte si z naší speciální nabídky lázeňské pobyty za zvýhodněné ceny.

Lázeňské hotely MIRAMARE nabízejí komplexní služby pod jednou střechou. Prvotřídní lázeňskou péči, odborný lékařský a zdravotnický personál, procedury na bázi přírodních léčivých zdrojů. Příjemné ubytování, výborná kuchyně a volný vstup do bazénu pro hotelové hosty jsou samozřejmostí.

NOVINKA NAŠICH LÁZNÍ - KOMPLEXNÍ KÚRA ZÁKLADNÍ



Vycházíme vstříc našim hostům a rozšiřujeme nabídku lázeňského programu Komplexní kúra o Komplexní kúru základní. Základním rozdílem je počet procedur a vyšetření týdně - u Komplexní kúry je to 22 procedur a vyšetření (z toho 8 velkých lázeňských procedur), u Komplexní kúry základní je to 18 procedur a vyšetření (z toho 6 velkých lázeňských procedur).

Více o lázeňské Komplexní kúře

Tradiční OTEVÍRÁNÍ PRAMENŮ v lázních Luhačovice



Ve dnech 8. - 10. května proběhne v lázeňském městě Luhačovice tradiční **Otevírání pramenů, tentokráte s podtitulem "Návraty do lázní Luhačovice"**. Těšit se můžete na bohatý kulturní program obohacený o přehlídku historických vozidel a historických bicyklů.

Prožijte tyto dny v našich lázeňských hotelech Miramare a rezervujte si noslední volná místa.