



**Universitatea *Transilvania* din Braşov**

**HABILITATION THESIS  
SUMMARY**

**MARKETING RESEARCHES IN BRAŞOV TOURISM  
DESTINATION**

**Domain: MARKETING**

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The first part of the habilitation thesis contains the results of some marketing researches conducted in Brasov tourism destination, with the aim to find improvement solutions for the marketing of this destination. These researches started from the evaluation of the Brasov destination image and the identification of the main factors that influence this image. New research directions have been developed for every influence factor.

These researches started from a marketing problem which consists in a certain inconsistency of the Brasov destination marketing, which do not have a scientific basis resulted from marketing researches among the consumers. The destination marketing policies cannot also ignore the objectives of sustainable development so that the marketing researches targeted every pillar of the sustainable development model: economy, society and environment.

Taking into consideration the above problems, the first research had the objective to identify the image of Brasov tourism destination in the tourists' mind. This research was conducted based on a survey among tourists from accommodation units in Brasov city. In order to obtain the image we evaluated 21 attributes of the Brasov destination and the general image of the Brasov destination taking into consideration their entire experience with this destination. The results reveal a positive image and 5 determinant factors have been extracted from the 21 items that were evaluated. These factors have been labeled as follows: **“leisure”**, **“security”**, **“infrastructure”**, **“environment”** and **“friendly destination”**. Further these factors have been approached as new research directions with the aim to identify the visitors' perceptions towards these components.

Concerning the **leisure component** we conducted a survey meant to identify the opportunity to introduce two products on the market in order to enrich the current leisure offer of the Brasov destination. The main objective was to identify the tourists' interest to visit cultural routes and their intentions to buy a tourist card, which integrates more services and facilities from Brasov destination. The results reveal that the respondents are not very familiarised with the two products, but they have a high interest to buy them. This interest is influenced by the tourists' travel characteristics but only in a small measure by their demographics. Thus the tourists that travel for leisure purpose are more likely to buy such products so that this market segment should be targeted by policy makers. Taking into consideration that the tourists interested by both products have similar characteristics we consider that the two products could be integrated and the cultural routes could be included in the offer of a Brasov tourist card.

The **security component** of Brasov destination has been approached on several directions using quantitative and qualitative methods: a survey among the tourists, a secondary data analysis regarding the criminality in Brasov County and three Focus Groups. The result show that the security was perceived more broadly than through a crime lens, incorporating, for

example, access to good health services and easy access to money changing facilities. It is also underlined the necessity to develop improvement projects for infrastructure, environment protection, but also to solve problems that impinged directly on tourists, such as robberies, and other social and situational features that contributed to tourists feeling anxious or unsafe (begging, the feeling of being cheated by taxi drivers, and the conditions around the Brașov railway station).

The third factor that influence the image of Brasov destination, concerning the **infrastructure**, has been approached from the perspective of tourists' satisfaction regarding the accommodation facilities, as the accommodation is the main product for which the tourists pay a certain price in a tourism destination. The research results show a high level of customer satisfaction taking into account the entire experience with Brasov's accommodation units. Taking into account the evaluation of more attributes of the accommodation services, two main components have been extracted: tangible aspects and security (concerning the location) and intangible aspects (concerning the personnel and offered services). The results also show that the demographic and travel characteristics have not a significant influence on the general satisfaction level of tourists.

Concerning the **environment** component of the destination's image, we conducted two surveys. One of them aimed at indentifying the intention of tourists to choose a eco-certified accommodation unit and the other one had the objective to identify the tourists' concern towards the environment conservation and protection. The results reveal a high availability of tourists to support environment protection initiatives and a strong intention to choose eco-certified accommodation units.

Further research directions will be oriented towards the fifth component of the destination image with the aim to measure in which extent Brasov destination is considered **friendly with the visitors**. Other aspects that were not enough explored in the previous researches will be also approached in future researches regarding Brasov tourism destination.

The second part of this thesis contains the development plan of my professional career on medium and long run. This one has been designed starting from the previous achievements with the aim to contribute to reaching the strategic objective of the structures in which I am working: department, faculty and university. The career plan has been detailed on two strategic directions: **development of the teaching activity**, including the coordination of PhD theses in Marketing field; and **development of the research activity** by carry on the researches in Brasov destination and by opening new research directions.