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The contribution of revenue marketing to improving the competitiveness of tourist accommodation companies in Spain

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ABSTRACT: *While recent research has focused on assessing how to make tourist accommodation companies more competitive, there are no studies so far that attempt to understand the role of revenue management and marketing in achieving this competitiveness. The present study evaluates this role by triangulating qualitative and quantitative methods among a sample of 183 companies. The results confirm the existence of an operational relationship between revenue management and marketing, as well as operational practices that facilitate communication between these areas that further promote the companies' competitiveness. This allows us to lay the foundations of a new concept, that of revenue marketing specifically oriented towards business success and customer satisfaction*

KEYWORDS: - *- revenue marketing, revenue management, marketing, forecast, demand forecasting, pricing, segmentation.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The experience of those involved in the hotel business demonstrates how a close working relationship between the areas of revenue management and marketing favours the competitiveness of tourist accommodation companies in Spain or EATEs as they are called after their acronym – i.e. empresas de alojamiento turístico en España. The tourist sector, and specifically that of tourist accommodation, is part of an environment that is ever more changeable, unstable and fickle, which makes adaptation to change an essential requirement for business survival. In recent years, there has been an increase in online interactions, in which a digital ecosystem has emerged that has placed the sector in direct contact with customers, meaning that the market reacts much faster, with greater agility and in broader, global manner. In this context, tourist accommodation companies need to weigh up their options very carefully and make decisions via a double perspective, the short and the long term. For this reason, tourist accommodation firms have had to transform their form of organisation, managing areas such as marketing in a different way and introducing others such as revenue management, the two being closely related to one another. So if revenue management attends to demand while marketing attracts it, the lack of coordination between the two sections can be detrimental to the company whenever contradictory actions are adopted that confuse the customer, and undermine the rapid adaptation the sector currently demands of companies seeking to maintain their competitive edge.

The principal objective of this paper, is thus to optimise the competitiveness of tourist accommodation companies in Spain via revenue marketing strategies that coordinate both areas and make them more efficient, producing the best results and greatest customer satisfaction In the forthcoming study, we will analyse how to improve competitiveness among accommodation companies by introducing a new operational tool, namely revenue marketing.

To be specific, we set out to corroborate the following investigative hypotheses:

H1. The existence of a relationship between the areas of revenue management and marketing.

H2. EATEs perform revenue management tasks to improve their profitability.

H3. EATEs implement marketing techniques to channel demand in their own direction.

H4. To verify whether the operational practices that favour the internal communication between revenue management and marketing areas contribute to the improvement of the competitiveness of EATEs.

The present article is divided into five sections, of which the following one provides a literature review, and the third describes methodology. The fourth discusses the principal results, while the final section summarises the main conclusions.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The massive use of ICTs in the hotel sector, as indicated by Vives et al. (2018), has allowed the adoption of a more customer-oriented approach through pricing techniques that seek to optimise the returns obtained from them. In this sense, revenue management has been widely defined in the literature as an information and pricing system aimed at ensuring the right capacity at the right time and in the right place in order to maximise revenues (Ivanov, 2014; Ivanov and Zhechev, 2012; Legoherel et al., 2013; Smith et al., 1992). As stated in the work of Kimes et al. (1998), revenue management should be a dynamic pricing strategy that is carried out according to demand forecasts, taking into account the price sensitivity of specific customer segments.

As stated by Vives et al. (2018), the variables that determine hotel revenues (especially in the short term) are price, occupancy and demand, although we believe they are not the only ones. Price is an element or variable of revenue management that also occurs in marketing, which acquires special importance, among other reasons, for its influence on demand, as a short-term demand management tool, as a powerful competitive instrument, as the only factor providing revenue, which in many purchasing decisions is the only information readily available to the customer, and as a factor with a key psychological effect on the consumer.

Moreover, according to Hung et al. (2010), among the various tools available to revenue management, pricing is the most flexible and most easily adapted to the dynamic environment of the hotel sector. We would like to add that such pricing needs to be based on a prior segmentation of the clientele. With regard to price optimisation, we agree with Elgmagharaby and Keskinocak (2003) that determining this is a complex process in which various elements such as the availability of the offer, the customer's evaluation of the product and the expected future demand need to be taken into consideration.

If we now focus on the segmentation linked to the price optimisation process, there is a broad range of proposals regarding the most appropriate segmentation model or structure. When it comes o the forecast or estimation of demand over a certain period of time (forecasting), we consider it to be an invaluable tool in organising prices commonly used in revenue management.

The demand forecasting process takes into account, according to Guadix et al. (2010), bookings already made (on hand bookings) and bookings to occur over the days ahead (pickup). We agree with Chen & Kachani (2007) that hotels can increase their profits by forecasting room occupancy based on data from the past. In this sense, we firmly believe such previous data and its interpretation should be available equally to revenue management and marketing departments, being useful for both optimising the profitability of the organisation as well as providing information on the purchasing habits of customers. Pricing, where elements such as estimating demand are taken into account, must go hand in hand with segmentation, especially when the aim is to implement revenue marketing strategies that benefit the company and, at the same time, the consumer. For a revenue management system to be effective, the company must be able to segment the market into different types of customers (Ladany, 1996). The main reasons that make segmentation essential in revenue management are that it facilitates more accurate forecasts of patterns of demand (Chávez, 2005), adapts the product to the customer's needs (Planagumà et al. 2012), expedites the development of market strategies for each group (Planagumà et al. 2012), and optimises revenue management and marketing tasks. Segmentation is a key strategic element in the application of revenue management (Taliani, 2016), and after identifying the different segments, they need to be kept separate to prevent demand migrating from high- to low-price segments, with consequent loss of revenue.

A proper knowledge of customer segments and their main features can be used to good effect when it comes to pricing (Wu et al., 2012), helping managers to better plan their marketing and pricing strategies. As Ho (2016) points out, the line between revenue management and marketing is becoming increasingly blurred. While

traditionally treated as diametrically opposed disciplines, there have been recent changes in the relationship between the two in order to achieve the common goal of optimising profitability as well as customer satisfaction (Ho, 2016).

We agree with Ho (2016) that revenue management and marketing are really two sides of the same coin. Each department possesses key pieces of demand information which, when integrated, result in a comprehensive and critical view of patterns of demand, preferences and buying behaviour. We concur with Ho (2016) that communication problems and misalignment of objectives have meant that these two departments have generally failed to collaborate successfully. The daily need for continuous decision-making renders it essential that both these departments, revenue management and marketing, share information on a regular basis, and this is the basic principle on which the present article is based. Access to critical information held by both departments is necessary for independent decision-making.

This calls for companies to be equipped with an automated and integrated environment, where data is shared efficiently in accepted formats and at an appropriate level of detail. Moreover, as pointed out by Ho (2016), new opportunities will arise to synchronise demand generation with demand control activities in order to achieve more profitable revenues through intelligent management of demand. In a truly integrated system, all decisions are synchronised through access to real-time integrated data and analytics. This requires prior analysis of the information that both departments need to share on a regular basis.

Ho (2016) rightly points out that smart demand management can be achieved through small steps, including making the technologies fundamental to their operation readily available for the use of both departments, and the automated exchange of key data. While we see technology as being one of the factors linking the two departments, it is clear that the best way to implement smart demand management (which technology facilitates) is to demonstrate its success.

In conclusion, we fully agree with Ho (2016) that the careful integration of both departments, revenue management and marketing, will facilitate smart demand management. This mutual collaboration should not cause either department to lose sight of their core competencies and raison d'être. The discipline of revenue management is constantly evolving, but the core focus of creating profitable pricing strategies must not change. The same has to be true for the marketing section, which must not lose its core competencies and focus. However, all of this leads, as we understand it, to the inevitable emergence of a new discipline, revenue marketing, which facilitates smart demand management

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in this study was both qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative methodology was based on in-depth interviews and the use of a panel of experts (Delphi). With regard to the panel of experts, a whole set of interviews was planned with the aim of obtaining primary data, as well as feedback on certain features that would later be incorporated into the interviews. As for the in-depth interviews, we chose to keep them unstructured, the questions for the main idea under investigation being open and simple, and easily adapted to requirements of research and the nature of the interviewees (Del Rincón et al., 1995; Vargas, 2012). These interviews allowed experts to obtain an overview of the research topic, while also gathering opinions and assessments, which served as the basis for preparing and designing the survey, i.e. the part referring to the qualitative methodology of the work.

In terms of the number of participants, 18 interviews were carried out, of which eight were with academics and ten with professionals from the tourism sector. With regard to the selection requirements of interviewees, as pointed out by Vallés (1997) and Varguillas & Ribot (2007) the fact that they had access to relevant information about the purpose of this study had to be taken into account. The interviews were conducted face-to-face during the months of August 2018 and March 2019.

With regard to the panel of experts, two groups were consulted, academics and professionals from the hotel sector, and their knowledge and experience of the subject under investigation were instrumental in establishing the three objectives described in the Introduction to this work. The development of the Delphi

method began with designing a questionnaire based on the results of the literature review and the answers received during the interviews carried out previously.

With regard to the experts, the following table shows both the profile and the number of experts consulted.

Table 1. Profile of participants and distribution of responses (percentage)

Sector of participant	Percentage of responses	Number of participants
Academic	48%	42
Professional	52%	46
Total	100%	88

Source: Compiled by the author based on the Delphi carried out (2019)

As can be seen, of the 88 experts consulted, 52% of them belonged to the professional sector, while the remaining 48% were academics. In order to optimise the distribution of the questionnaire, the SurveyMonkey technology platform was used, which allowed the first and second rounds of the questionnaire to be sent to the panel of experts via an online link. This link was mainly distributed by e-mail and WhatsApp, although some responses were also collected in person and by phone. The process of drawing up, distributing and analysing the Delphi took place between March 2018 and October 2019.

The questionnaire sent to the experts gathered information regarding the general data of the participant's profile, as well as the data necessary to respond to the aims set out in this article. To quantify the answers of the questionnaires, a scale was used in which answers assumed values from 1 to 4, these being: 1 - Strongly disagree; 2 -Disagree; 3 -Agree; 4 - Totally agree.

The following specific propositions were put to the panel of experts:

- Proposition 1: There is a relationship between the area of revenue management and that of marketing in a tourist accommodation company in Spain (SEATE).
- Proposition 2: The relationship between the area of revenue management and that of marketing in a tourist accommodation company is based on the similarity of aims, factors and the geographical origin of the two sections.
- Proposition 3: The percentages of the variables measuring how close the relationship between revenue management and marketing in the EATEs are distributed as follows:
  - 10% existence of a revenue management area component.
  - 10% existence of a marketing area component.
  - 10% existence of the operational relationship between both areas component.
  - 30% existence of how these two areas are organised in the company (separate and uncoordinated; separate but coordinated, partially united and united) component.
  - 35% degree of information sharing between the two areas component.
  - 5% the use of coordination tools between both areas component.
- Proposition 4: The competitiveness of tourism accommodation companies is defined by their business success.
- Proposition 5: The components of a successful tourist accommodation company depend on economic factors, reputation or value of the company, loyalty and occupancy, among others.
- Proposition 6: The value of the company as something intangible can be measured by the company's online reputation.
- Proposition 7: The percentages of the variables measuring the success of a tourist accommodation company are distributed as follows:
  - 80% economic data component (40% EBITDA and 40% financial result).
  - 15% online reputation component.
  - 4% customer loyalty component.
  - 1% average occupancy component.

Table 2 shows the results of the above propositions

Table 2. Results obtained from the panel of experts with respect to the 7 propositions put forward.

Proposition	Average	Standard deviation	Coefficient of variation	Answer 1	Answer 2	Answer 3	Answer 4
1	3.579	0.519	1.145	0.0%	1.1%	39.8%	59.1%
2	3.159	0.565	0.178	1.1%	5.7%	69.3%	23.9%
3	3.056	0.411	0.134	0.0%	5.7%	83.0%	11.4%
4	3.034	0.576	0.189	0.0%	14.8%	67.0%	18.2%
5	3.477	0.502	0.144	0.0%	0.0%	52.3%	47.7%
6	2.943	0.631	0.214	3.4%	12.5%	0.5%	13.6%
7	2.965	0.353	0.119	0.0%	8.0%	87.5%	4.5%

Source: Compiled by the author (2019)

Table 2 shows that 98.9% (39.8% agree and 59.1% totally agree) of the experts agree with the first proposition, while only 1.1% disagree with it. Therefore, the result of this first proposition in the Delphi panel of experts corroborates that there is a link between revenue management and marketing, which may represent a first step towards demonstrating that, if there is a link between the two, it makes sense to implement a coordinating relationship between them to optimise their activities and performance. Regarding the second proposition, 69.3% of the experts agree, 23.9% totally agree, 5.7% disagree and 1.1% strongly disagree. It can be seen that there is a broad consensus that the relationship between revenue management and marketing in an EATE is based on the similarity of aims, factors and geographical origin of the two disciplines. Once it has been determined where revenue management and marketing converge (similarity of objectives, factors and geographical origin), the second proposition implies that it is easier to identify in which areas these coordinating actions must be deployed in order to optimise their revenues, so that the objectives pursued and the factors involved in both disciplines must be linked. With regard to the third proposition, it can be seen that 83% of the experts agree and 11.4% totally agree with the percentage proportion proposed to describe the score of the relationship between revenue management and marketing, compared to 0% who strongly disagreed, and 5.7% who disagreed. The result of the third proposition implies being able to translate, quantitatively and qualitatively, what is understood by close coordination between revenue management and marketing, in such a way that it is possible to specify, with a specific score, the degree of connection with which the two areas are relating to one another in tourist accommodation companies. Regarding the fourth proposition, a broad consensus can also be observed, with 67% of respondents agreeing and 18.2% totally agreeing, compared to 14.8% who disagreed. Although it may seem obvious, the fourth proposition supports the view that the competitiveness of EATEs is related to business success, so that the more competitive a company is, the more successful it will be. Regarding the fifth proposition, it is possible to observe that the consensus is practically unanimous, with 52.3% agreeing and 47.7% totally agreeing with the proposition. The fifth proposition allows us to identify the components of success, based on the consensus of the panel of experts, and this will allow us to determine which factors must be taken into account to affirm that an EATE is successful, so that, when we act on the variables of coordination of the revenue management and marketing areas, we can observe the variables of success and see if there is a correlation between the two. Specifically, the panel of experts considered that the components of success of the EATE depend on economic factors, reputation or value of the company, loyalty, and occupancy, among others. With regard to the sixth proposition, Table 2 shows that there is broad agreement on its validity (70.5% agree and 13.6% totally agree), compared to 14.9% (12.5% disagree and 3.4% strongly disagree) who feel otherwise. Finally, with regard to the seventh proposition, 92% (87.5% agree and 4.5% totally agree) of the experts were in favour of it, compared with 8% who disagreed. The demonstration of the main hypothesis required establishing, qualitatively and quantitatively, the factors that make up the dependent variable "success", which was made possible by the Delphi analysis, as the experts indicated how to calculate numerically the success score of the EATEs.

Based on the validity of the propositions made by the panel of experts, the next step was to pass the questionnaire that was drawn up on to the sample of selected companies. In this regard, the companies were

classified between micro-companies (companies that employ less than 10 people and whose annual turnover does not exceed 2 million euros), small companies (companies that employ 10 to 50 people and whose annual turnover exceeds 2 million euros and is less than 10 million euros), medium-sized companies (companies that employ between 51 and 249 people and whose annual turnover exceeds 10 million and is less than 50 million euros), and large companies (with more than 250 people and whose business volume exceeds 50 million euros). In this study, the criterion of the size of workforce or number of employees was used as a classifying criterion, because of all those under consideration, that is the one that offers the greatest reliability in terms of its sources, and to which access is easiest, via the SABI database. The information here allows the companies to be segmented more precisely and in a manner that is more faithful to their actual form.

Once the company typologies had been defined, the sample of companies to be surveyed was then selected. The following table shows the specifications of the selected sample.

Table 3. Sample sheet

SPECIFICATIONS OF THE SAMPLE		
Impact of coordinated relations between revenue management and marketing areas on the competitiveness of tourist accommodation companies in Spain.		
GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE	SPAIN	
TOTALITY	28,836 tourist accommodation companies	
SAMPLE	183	
LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE	92.8% p=q= 50% ($Z_{\alpha/2}$:1.82)	
SAMPLE ERROR	7.2%	
SAMPLE UNIT	Marketing and revenue management executives and operators, sales directors, managers and company owners	
SAMPLE SIZE	183	Sampling error by strata
Microenterprises	49	6%
Small companies	89	6%
Medium-sized companies	34	9%
Large companies	11	15%
Total sample	183	92.8%
Method of collection	Offline surveys (face-to-face and telephone surveys) and online surveys sent mainly by email and WhatsApp.	
Sampling procedure	Stratified random sampling by simple allocation	
Date of fieldwork	From May to November 2019	

Source: Compiled by the author based on the study carried out (2019)

The online survey was sent mainly by e-mail and via WhatsApp. The offline survey was conducted in person and also by telephone. The survey was addressed to marketing and revenue management executives, commercial directors, general managers and company owners within the EATE sector. In order to optimise its distribution, the SurveyMonkey technology platform was used for its formulation, allowing it to be sent via a hyperlink. The quantitative analysis field research was carried out from May to November 2019. The aim of the questionnaire was mainly to test, through inferential data analysis, the main hypothesis and the secondary hypotheses of the investigation. Its design was tailored to meet parameters of clarity and brevity (Sánchez, 1997) and was developed based on the results obtained from the in-depth interviews with experts and the Delphi method, and on the basis of exploratory and documentary research on the development of questionnaires in similar research. It was structured into five blocks of questions: a first block, on descriptive characteristics of the EATE in question and the implementation or otherwise of revenue management and marketing tasks; a second block, on the existence of an operational relationship between the two within the company; a third block, on the organisational structure of the revenue management and marketing areas, or the assignment of these tasks, within the company; a fourth block, measuring the degree of coordination between the two areas and the use or

otherwise of coordinating tools; and a fifth block, to obtain data on the EATE's variables of success and competitiveness.

The selection of the sample units to which the questionnaire was addressed was randomly selected based on the following main sources: Directorio del Turismo en España (Preferente, 2018); Directorio de Empresas de Alojamiento Turístico (El Economista, 2018); professional forums on social networks such as Facebook and LinkedIn; and Directories of hotels in Spain (Booking.com).

The dissemination of the questionnaire led to the following response rates.

Table 4. Questionnaire response rates.

Percentage analysis of the responses obtained from to the questionnaire								
Type of company	No.	%	Sent	% Sent	Responded	% of those sent	% out of 183	Sampling error
Micro	24,942	86.5 %	95	25%	49	52%	27%	6%
Small	13.281	11.38%	95	25%	89	94%	49%	6%
Medium	514	1.78%	95	25%	34	36%	19%	9%
Large	99	0.34%	95	25%	11	12%	6%	15%
Total	38,836	100%	380	100 %	183	48%	100%	7.2%

Source: Compiled by the author based on the analysis of the behaviour of the companies studied (2019).

Table 4 shows that the overall response rate achieved was 48%, obtained after several online mailings of the questionnaire, phone and face-to-face surveys, until the sample was representative. The results were tabulated using ordinal variables. The dependent variable, "success of the company", was assessed for each of the different groups of companies: micro, small, medium and large companies. The SPSS statistical package SPSS version 25.0.0.0 (SPSS_Amos_25_Trial_win32) was used for computer processing the collected data.

IV. RESULTS

In this section we will answer the different research questions or hypotheses put forward in the Introduction to this article, which are based on determining whether there is a relationship between the area of revenue management and that of marketing and how this relationship is developed with the aim of improving competitiveness in EATEs.

The first step in the analysis of the results was to establish two groups of variables: the independent or explanatory variables, which in this case we have called "connection between revenue management and marketing" variables; and the dependent variables, which we have called "success variables of the tourist accommodation company". Among the independent variables we have established the following categories: performance of revenue management tasks in the company, performance of marketing tasks, form of operational organisation of the revenue management and marketing areas, existence of an operational relationship between these areas, degree to which they share information, coordination tools used, number of workers dedicated to each of these two areas, and score for coordination between revenue management and marketing areas. Regarding the score for coordination between the revenue management and marketing areas, this has been established through the Delphi questionnaire, specifically, based on the result of Proposition 3 above. With regard to the dependent variables, in this case, "variables of success of the tourist accommodation company", the following have been established: economic-financial data of the company (obtained from the SABI platform); quality perceived by the customer through online reputation, quality perceived by the customer through the percentage of customer loyalty; average occupancy and success score. The calculation method and components of the success score are validated through the result of Proposition 5 of the Delphi method

A descriptive analysis of the units in the sample was then carried out, highlighting the most relevant aspects. With regard to the nature of the companies in the sample, of the total of 183 units in the sample, 26.8% (49 units) are micro-companies, 48.6% (89 units) are small companies, 18.6% (34 units) are medium-sized companies and 6% (11 units) are large companies. The following table shows the mean, standard deviation and confidence intervals of the population mean at 95% (lower and upper limit) for various elements of the sample

companies, such as: revenue, EBITDA, number of rooms and category of the establishments in the sample. This has been done in order to allow for comparisons between groups of companies.

Table 5. Characteristics of the groups of companies in the sample.

	Micro	Small	Medium	Large	Total
N	49 (26.8%)	89 (48.6%)	34 (18.6%)	11 (6%)	183 (100%)
REVENUE Mean Standard deviation	398580.71 (614361.48)	5322240.51 (19697443.40)	12979790.68 (10526877.42)	219385501.8 (199813812.3)	18293788.33 (70847667.31)
REVENUE Confidence interval 95% population mean	[251208.33 - 575921.55]	[2912978.26 - 9964694.49]	[9582989.30 - 16970533.34]	[120144563.60 - 349254136.1]	[9935279.62 - 28129509.88]
EBITDA Mean Standard deviation	-15747.55 (436362.91)	1275542.85 (6125001.64)	2977900.64 (5058573.12)	21879763.45 (23284432.51)	2484577.61 (8820310.51)
EBITDA Confidence interval 95% population mean	[-177563.92 - 63418.09]	[558250.40 - 2580655.16]	[1479319.09 - 4712778.44]	[10062990.14 - 36026254.39]	[1465607.69 - 3803078.72]
Number of rooms	49 (26.8%)	89 (48.6%)	34 (18.6%)	11 (6%)	183 (100%)
Less than 50	33 (67.3%)	11 (12.4%)	1 (2.9%)	0 (0%)	45 (100%)
50- 100	7 (14.3%)	23 (25.8%)	2 (5.9%)	0 (0%)	32 (100%)
101-200	7 (14.3%)	35 (39.3%)	9 (26.5%)	0 (0%)	51(100%)
201-300	0 (0%)	7 (7.9%)	9 (26.5%)	0 (0%)	16(100%)
301-400	1 (2.0%)	2 (2.2%)	4 (11.8%)	1 (9.1%)	8 (100%)
401-500	0 (0%)	2 (2.2%)	3 (8.8%)	0 (0%)	5 (100%)
More than 500	1 (2.0%)	9 (10.1%)	6 (17.6%)	10(90.9%)	26(100%)
Category of establishments					
Category	49 (26.8%)	89 (48.6%)	34 (18.6%)	11 (6%)	183(100%)
1 star (or 1 key)	10 (20.4%)	5 (5.6%)	1 (2.9%)	0 (0%)	16 (100%)
2 stars (or 2 keys)	13 (26.5%)	6 (6.7%)	2 (5.9%)	0 (0%)	21(100%)
3 stars (or 3 keys)	11 (22.4%)	22 (24.7%)	7 (20.6%)	3 (27.3%)	43(100%)
4 stars (or 4 keys)	14 (28.6%)	53 (59.6%)	18 (52.9%)	8(72.7%)	93(100%)
5 stars	1 (2.0%)	3 (3.4%)	3 (8.8%)	0 (0%)	7 (100%)
5 star Grand Luxe	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (8.8%)	0 (0%)	3 (100%)

Source: Compiled by the author based on the inferential data analysis carried out (2019)

In order to analyse descriptively the variables that define the success of the sampled EATEs, the mean, standard deviation, 95% confidence interval of the population mean (upper and lower limit) of the following

dependent variables have been calculated: margin, financial profitability, average occupancy, online reputation and loyalty. The results of these variables are shown in the table below.

Table 6. Variables used to measure the success of the sampled companies

	Micro	Small	Medium	Large	Total
N	78 (42,6%)	79 (43,2%)	14 (7.6%)	12 (6.6%)	183(100%)
MARGIN (mean+std. dev.)	17.11% (16.66%)	16.78% (22.19%)	16.14% (30.01%)	19.43% (15.42%)	17.05% (20.19%)
MARGIN (95% population mean CI)	[13.35%-20.87%]	[11.81%-21.75%]	[-1.18%-33.47%]	[9.96%-29.23%]	[14.10%-19.99%]
FINANCIAL PROFITABILITY (mean+std. dev.)	14.64% (26.00%)	27.37% (29.49%)	28.77% (27.06%)	25.25% (26.00%)	21.91% (28.14%)
FINANCIAL PROFITABILITY (95% population mean CI)	[8.78%-20.51%]	[20.77%-33.98%]	[13.14%-44.39%]	[8.72%-41.77%]	[17.81%-26.02%
OCCUPATION	78(42,6%)	79(43,2%)	14(7,6%)	12(6,6%)	183 (100%)
Less than 75%	19(57.58%)	11(33.33%)	1(3.03%)	2(6.06)	33(18.03%)
76% –80%.	21(47.73%)	15(34.09%)	6(13.64%)	2(4.54%)	44(24.04%)
81% –85%	14(46.66%)	12(40%)	2(6.67%)	2(6.67%)	30(16.39%)
86% –90%.	17(34%)	27(54%)	1(2%)	5(10%)	50(27.32%)
91% –100%.	7(26.92%)	14(53.85%)	4(15.38%)	1(3.85%)	26(14.21%)
ONLINE REPUTATION	78(42,6%)	79(43,2%)	14(7,6%)	12(6,6%)	183(100%)
Less than 5	7(63.7%)	3(27.2%)	0(0%)	1(9.1%)	11(6.01%)
Between 5 and 7	5(83.33%)	1(16.67%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	6(3.28%)
Between 7 and 8	19(46.34%)	19(46.34)	2(4.88%)	1(2.44%)	41(22.40%)
Between 8 and 9	33(32.67%)	50(49.50%)	10(9.90%)	8(7.92%)	101(55.19%)
Between 9 and 10	14(58.4%)	6(25%)	2(8.3%)	2(8.3%)	24(13.11%)
LOYALTY (% of total)	78(42.6%)	79(43,2%)	14(7.6%)	12(6.6%)	183(100%)
0 –5%	4(26.67%)	10(66.67%)	1(6.66%)	0(0%)	15(8.20%)
5–10%	22(56.41%)	14(35.89%)	2(5.13%)	1((2.57%)	39(21.31%)
10–20%	25(36.76%)	36(52.95%)	3(4.41%)	4(5.88%)	68(37.16%)
More than 20%	27(44.26%)	19(31.14%)	8(13.12)	7(11.48%)	61(33.33%)
SUCCESS NOTE (mean+ std. dev.)	5.302 (2.080)	6.507 (2.020)	7.075 (1.688)	6.453 (2.817)	6.034 (2.164)
SUCCESS NOTE (95% population mean CI)	[4.83-5.77]	[6.06-6.96]	[6.10-8.05]	[4.66-8.24]	[5.72 – 6.35]

Source: Compiled by the author based on the inferential data analysis carried out (2019).

Analysing the values shown in the table, it is not possible to find significant differences between the margin of the different types of companies, as shown by the confidence intervals. Moreover, nor are there any significant differences between the financial profitability of the different types of companies. Likewise, we observe that 27.32% of the companies in the sample have an average occupancy rate of between 86% and 90%, followed by 24.04% of those with an average occupancy rate of between 76% and 80%. At the bottom, with 14.21%, are the companies with an occupancy rate of between 91% and 100%. Clearly, average occupancy is a relevant factor in measuring the success of the company, provided that it is not taken into account in isolation, without considering other factors such as financial profitability. These factors also include online reputation, with 55.19% of the sample having an online reputation of between 8 and 9 out of a maximum score of 10. Only 13.11% have an online reputation of between 9 and 10. With regard to the customer loyalty index of the companies in the sample, 37.16% have a loyalty index of between 10% and 20%, followed by 33.33% represented by those with a loyalty index of more than 20%.

Likewise, the table below shows the percentage distribution of the varying existence of a revenue management and marketing area and the number of employees in the revenue management and marketing areas, by type of company. Thus on the basis of the information contained in Tables 7 and 8, the second, third and fourth hypotheses established in the Introduction will be answered.

Table 7. Existence of revenue management and marketing, and number of revenue management and marketing employees

	Micro	Small	Medium	Large	Total
Revenue area	49 (26.8%)	89 (48.6%)	34 (18.6%)	11 (6%)	183(100%)
No	10 (58.8%)	4 (23.5%)	3 (17.6%)	0(0%)	17(100%)
Yes	39 (23.5%)	85 (51.2%)	31 (18.7%)	11 (6.6%)	166(100%)
No. of workers in Revenue	49 (26.8%)	89 (48.6%)	34 (18.6%)	11 (6.6%)	183(100%)
0-1	29 (37.7%)	38 (49.4%)	9 (11.7%)	1 (1.3%)	77(100%)
2-4	15 (19.0%)	41 (51.9%)	19 (24.1%)	4 (5.1%)	79(100%)
5-10	3 (27.3%)	4 (36.4%)	2 (18.2%)	2 (18.2%)	11(100%)
11-16	0 (0%)	3 (50.0%)	3 (50.0%)	0 (0%)	6 (100%)
17-22	1 (25.0%)	2 (50.0%)	1 (25.0%)	0 (0%)	4(100%)
23-28	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (100%)
More than 28	1 (16.7%)	1 (16.7%)	0 (0%)	4 (66.7%)	6 (100%)
Marketing area	49 (26.8%)	89 (48.6%)	34 (18.6%)	11 (6%)	166(100%)
No	10 (45.5%)	11 (50.0%)	1 (4.5%)	0(0%)	22(100%)
Yes	39 (24.2%)	78 (48.4%)	33 (20.5%)	11(6.8%)	161(100%)
No. of employees in Marketing	49 (26.8%)	89 (48.6%)	34 (18.6%)	11 (6%)	183(100%)
0-1	30 (39.5%)	35 (46.1%)	9 (11.8%)	2 (2.6%)	76(100%)
2-4	17 (20.2%)	45 (53.6%)	19 (22.6%)	3 (3.6%)	84(100)
5-10	1 (12.5%)	4 (50.0%)	1 (12.5%)	2 (25.0%)	8(100%)
11-16	0 (0%)	3 (60.0%)	2 (40.0%)	0(0%)	5(100%)
17-22	0 (0%)	0 (0,0%)	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	2 (100%)
23-28	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (100%)
More than 28	1 (12.5%)	2 (25.0%)	2 (25.0%)	3 (37.5%)	8(100%)

Source: Compiled by the author based on inferential data analysis (2019).

As Table 8 shows below, 90.71% of the companies in the sample carry out revenue management tasks, compared to the 9.29% that do not. To break this figure down further, 43.17% of the sample have between 2 and 4 employees dedicated to revenue management functions, followed by 42.8% who have 1 or no revenue management employee. Likewise, 6.01% have 5 to 10 revenue management employees, while 3.28% have 11 to 16 and more than 28 employees. Only 2.19% have 17 to 22 employees.

With regard to marketing tasks, 87.98% of the sample perform marketing tasks, compared to 12.02% who do not. 45.9% of the sample have between 2 and 4 marketing workers, followed by 41.5% who have 0 to 1 worker. Likewise, 4.4% have 5 to 10 marketing employees and the same percentage is held by those who have more than 28 marketing employees. Meanwhile, 2.7% have 11 to 16 workers dedicated to marketing tasks.

With regard to the description of the operational relationship between revenue management and marketing, the following table (Table 9) shows the description of the variables that define the operational relationship between revenue management and marketing of the companies in the sample, by type of company.

Table 8. Percentage distribution of the existence of revenue management and marketing and number of revenue management and marketing employees in the sample companies

Revenue management area	**183(100%)**
No	17(9.29%)
Yes	166(90.71%)
No. of employees, revenue management	183(100%)
0-1	77(42.08%)
2-4	79(43.17%)
5-10	11(6.01%)
11-16	6(3.28%)
17-22	4(2.19%)
23-28	0 (0%)
More than 28	6(3.28%)
Marketing area	183(100%)
No	22(12.02%)
Yes	161(87.98%)
No. of employees, marketing	183(100%)
0-1	76(41.53%)
2-4	84(45.90%)
5-10	8(4.37%)
11-16	5(2.73%)
17-22	0 (0%)
23-28	2(1.09%)
+28	8(4.37%)

Source: Compiled by the author based on inferential data analysis (2019).

Table 9. Variables describing the operational relationship between revenue management and marketing in the sample

	Micro	**Small**	**Medium**	**Large**	**Total**
Relationship between revenue and marketing	49 (26.8%)	89 (48.6%)	34 (18.6%)	11 (6%)	183(100%)
No	7 (46,7%)	7 (46.7%)	0 (0%)	1(6.6%)	15(100%)
Yes	42 (25.0%)	82 (48.8%)	34 (20.2%)	10(6%)	168(100%)
Types of revenue-marketing organisation	49 (26.8%)	89 (48.6%)	34 (18.6%)	11 (6%)	183(100%)
Separate and uncoordinated	10 (41.7%)	11 (45.8%)	2 (8.3%)	1 (4.2%)	24 (100%)
Separate but coordinated	26 (26.3%)	44 (44.4%)	23 (23.2%)	6 (6.1%)	99 (100%)

Partially joined areas	8 (20.0%)	22 (55.0%)	8 (20.0%)	2 (5.0%)	40 (100%)
Joined-up areas	5 (26.3%)	11 (57.9%)	1 (5.3%)	2 (10.5%)	19 (100%)
Other	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0 %)	1 (100%)
Degree of information sharing	49 (26.8%)	89 (48.6%)	34 (18.6%)	11 (6%)	183(100%)
Never	22 (37.9%)	28 (48.3%)	4 (6.9%)	4 (6.9%)	58(100%)
Very low	13 (43.3%	12 (40.0%)	3 (10.0%)	2 (6.7%)	30(100%)
Under	4 (40.0%)	2 (20.0%)	4 (40.0%)	0 (0%)	10((100%)
Medium	4 (16.7%)	13 (54.2%)	6 (25.0%)	1 (4.1%)	24(100%)
High	3 (8.3%)	21 (58.3%)	10 (27.8%)	2 (5.6%)	35(100%)
Very high	3 (12.0%)	13 (52.0%)	7 (28.0%)	2 (8.0%)	26(100%)
Coordination Tools	49 (26.8%)	89 (48.6%)	34 (18.6%)	11 (6%)	183(100%)
None	11 (57.9%)	8 (42.1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	19(100%)
Interface	8 (38.1%)	6 (28.6%)	7 (33.3%)	0 (0%	21(100%)
Excel	4 (18.2%)	13 (59.1%)	5 (22.7%)	0 (0%)	22(100%)
Meetings	18 (23.7%)	38 (50.0%)	15 (19.7%)	5 (6.6%)	76(100%)
All the above	8 (17.8%)	24 (53.3%)	7 (15.6%)	6 (13.3%)	45(100%)
Score Relationship between marketing and revenuemanagement	5.168 (2.168) [4.545-5.791]	6.455 (2.195) [5.993-6.918]	7.005 (1.559) [6.461-7.549]	6.600 (2.147) [5.157-8.043]	6.221 (2.171) [5.905-6.538]

Source: Compiled by the author based on inferential data analysis (2019).

Table 9, which we complement with the data in Table 10 below, allows us to describe the percentage of variables that define the operational relationship between the revenue management and marketing areas of the companies in the sample. Specifically, the information contained in Tables 9 and 10 allows us to address Hypotheses 1 and 4 established in the introduction, insofar as, based on these hypotheses, the aim is to determine whether there is a relationship between the revenue management and marketing areas, as well as to define the operational practices of the relationship between revenue management and marketing that favour the intercommunication between the two and which are contributing to improving the competitiveness of the EATEs.

Table 10 Percentage of variables defining the operational relationship between revenue management and marketing

	Total
Relationship between revenue management and marketing	183(100%)
No	15(8.20%)
Yes	168(91.80%)
How to organise the relationship between revenue management and marketing	183(100%)
Separate and uncoordinated	24(13.1%)
Separate but coordinated	99(54.1%)
Partially joined areas	40(21.9%)
Joined-up areas	19(10.4%)
Other	1 (0.5%)
Degree of information sharing	183(100%)
Never	58(31.69%)
Very low	30(16.39%)
Under	10((5.46%)
Medium	24(13.11%)

High	35(19.13%)
Very high	26(14.21%)
Coordination tools	183(100%)
None	19(10.38%)
Interface	21(11.48%)
Excel	22(12.02%)
Meetings	76(41.53%)
All the above	45(24.59%)

Source: Compiled by the author based on inferential data analysis (2019).

According to this data it appears that 91.80% of the companies in the sample consider that there is an operational relationship between revenue management and marketing, compared to 8.20% who, on the contrary, think otherwise. Breaking down this overall percentage, 54.1% of the companies in the sample organise the relationship between revenue management and marketing separately but in a coordinated way. The next largest group, 21.9% do so in a partially united way. Only 10.4% are fully joined up, while 13.1% are separate and uncoordinated. It is interesting to note that 31.69% never share information, compared to 19.13% who do so with a high frequency and 14.21% with a very high frequency. Coordination meetings between revenue management and marketing stand out as the most commonly used coordination tool by 41.53% of the sample. This is followed by 24.59% of the companies in the sample that use all the proposed coordination tools. As for the score of the relationship between the revenue management and marketing areas, it is possible to observe a slight upward trend in the score as the size of the company increases. Although, according to the confidence intervals of the population mean, no statistically significant differences can be found, a slight increasing trend can be observed with increasing company size.

V. CONCLUSION

In the present study we have set out to test the hypotheses set out in the Introduction. In this sense, our research has revealed the existence of an operational relationship between the areas of revenue management and marketing. This is of particular interest because it explains how the tourist accommodation sector has evolved by increasing its value and profitability, optimising its profits and customer satisfaction through the perfect combination of revenue management and marketing. The present study has thus laid the foundations on which to establish the empirical evidence that allows the effect of coordinating relations on the competitiveness of tourist accommodation companies in Spain to be tested.

At the same time, it has also been observed that revenue management tasks are being carried out in most of the EATEs, democratising their use and allowing all EATEs to have access to technological tools of revenue management that allow them to optimise their income. The effort of investment in human resources oriented to revenue management tasks bears witness to the importance that is being given to it, seen in the discovery that most of the EATEs in the sample employ between one and four workers in revenue management tasks. This may be due to the fact that companies are seeing that this strategy leads to improved performance and an easy return on investment. Moreover, with regard to marketing tasks, it has been verified that most of the EATEs in the sample are carrying out these tasks, although with more intensity on the part of the medium-sized and large companies. Likewise, the effort in investment in human resources dedicated to marketing in most of the EATEs in the sample is between one and four employees dedicated to this area. This shows that the marketing area is becoming increasingly important, as companies are adopting a more competitive position within the market by greatly improving their investment in this area. It has thus been demonstrated that EATEs consider revenue management and marketing to be equally relevant. Both areas are setting the course for EATEs towards the optimisation of their profitability and customer satisfaction, of which EATEs are increasingly aware.

It has also been possible to verify how a series of operational practices that favour intercommunication between the revenue management and marketing areas contribute to fostering the competitiveness of the EATEs. In this respect, there is a growing tendency for EATEs to coordinate the operational relationship between the revenue management and marketing areas, with micro-companies being less coordinated and medium-sized companies more so. This may be due to a greater awareness of their usefulness on the part of small, medium and large companies. However, the degree to which the revenue management and marketing areas share information could be improved, as most of them do so with little regularity. It has also become clear

that a significant majority of the EATEs in the sample use some or all of the coordinating tools between the revenue management and marketing areas, with regular meetings being one of the most important. This is particularly important because, through transparency in the handling and management of useful information between these areas via coordinating tools and implementing strategies and "revenue marketing" culture throughout the organisation, it is possible to improve the competitiveness of tourist accommodation companies.

Finally, based on the results obtained, which confirm the existence of a relationship between the areas of revenue management and marketing, as well as the operational practices that facilitate the intercommunication between the two in the EATEs, a new concept can be developed, that of "revenue marketing", which lays the foundations of a new discipline oriented towards business success and customer satisfaction.

The research results obtained should not, however, be considered as definitive, nor immutable over time, and should be subjected to new reviews, discoveries and new scientific points of view to gain a more exact and better knowledge of the issue. Therefore, we consider that there are still other lines of research to be pursued in the future, oriented more towards the detailed development of an exhaustive code of good practices in this field, as well as the development and examination of the consequences of the possible future automation of "revenue marketing" functions and the relevance of the human factor within them.

The present work also has some limitations. One of them stems from the fact that we encountered particular difficulty in accessing data collection due to the lack of transparency of some companies which, for strategic reasons, were reluctant to collaborate in the project. Likewise, the lack of previous similar studies and research with which to support or document the planned hypotheses proved another obstacle, as it made it much more laborious to support these hypotheses through documentation, analogically or empirically. Finally, the difficulty and large dimensions of the subject matter under study posed a further challenge to the successful achievement of this study. Despite all these limitations, the aim has been to offer an original contribution to the development of knowledge, in the understanding that this work can be useful in improving the competitiveness of EATEs.

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