

## **New Marketing Strategy in Tourism Sector: e-Tourism**

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**Abstract** Rapid development in information and communication technologies has created a transformation in the economic and social life through changing the way the trade dealt. New technologies help to improve the efficiency of the economy, create new job opportunities, spread the technical progress and new ideas easily, establish the simultaneous communication among people and institutions in the different countries and regions. The goal of this study is, evaluating the present situation of Turkey's tourism sector and using information technologies in the sector, to form long-term competition strategies for the sector which has important potential. Furthermore, it is searched that, depending on the data of World Tourism Organization which states serious changes would occur in tourism sector by 2023, how Turkey that has to be prepared for a merciless competition in tourism immediately, would take advantage of using e-tourism strategy in global competition.

**Key Words:** E-Tourism, Tourism Sector

### **Global Competition and Tourism Sector**

The importance of quality, competition and cost has risen in the world economy with arising of globalization concept. With development of information and communication technologies (ICT), removing borders and the studies of to free the international trade completely there is an intense competition in world economy. The rapid developments in technology, and attempts like globalization of international market, increase in communication, making the knowledge transfer and transportation easier and removing the barriers of free trade changed the economies and the strategies completely.

Technology, especially information and communication technologies has the most important role in these changes. The continuous developments in the hardware and software of information and communication technologies caused the old structures and processes significantly by providing the enterprises to construct their hierarchic forms again, to rise the efficiency of their management functions, to change the work processes effectively, to develop new products and services and to make new industries.

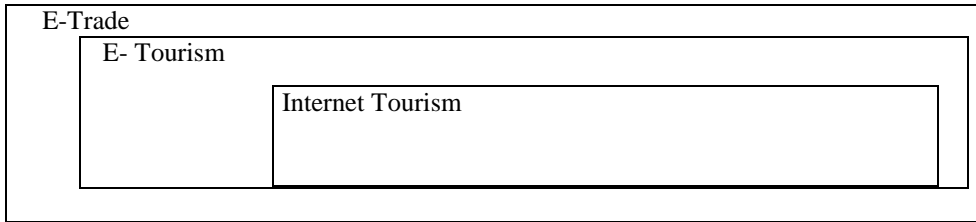
The competition that became harsh in the globalization process which occurs with developing technology made the enterprises try new strategies. The internet technology that erosa in the paralel of rapid technologies affected economy, education, consumer behaviours and our lives deeply. With the internet people have the chance to share their knowledge that they are uploaded to internet. With this reason the countries, people and companies make an added value to themselves via information and communication technologies.

### **The Definition and Importance of e-Tourism**

Nowadays trade methods at electronic media took place of classical trade methods and the companies which persistently try to use the classical trade methods have lost their competition advantages and so they can not continue their existence. Nowadays the most rapidly developing sector of E-trade is tourism sector.

E-Tourism; with a broad definition means the use of information and communication technologies in tourism sector. E-tourism; contains all kinds of buying and selling of goods, service and product and the money transfer by the means of electronic systems. E-tourism must not be confused with internet tourism which is its most important base. Internet which we will define as a web based information communication system which is served on a platform having a computer network can also be defined as buying touristic and transportation service via the computer

Networks<sup>1</sup>. While E-tourism is the most rapidly growing branch of E-trade the internet tourism is the most rapidly growing branch of E-tourism. We can show as follows with the help of the figure.



**Figure 1:** E-Trade, E- Tourism ve Internet Tourism

## **The Importance of Tourism Sector and e-Tourism for Turkey**

Tourism; becomes an important sector especially for developing countries like Turkey with its effect on balance of payments, creating employment and income, having a high added value, positive effects on substructure and superstructure and effects to the other sectors. (Özkök, 2003, p.72) Turkey is like a tourism heaven with its geopolitical and geostrategical situation, being a capital of many different cultures, looming large by being a country where 4 celestial religions meet, nonetheless having extremely clean beaches and bays as per the computing countries, and having the four seasons together at the same time. (Çeken and Erdem, 2003) Turkey's using these values with the aim of tourism will have an important role at the country's economical development. But the global competition is carried to internet depending on the rapid developments in information and communication technologies. With this reason Turkey who have many earthly goods in terms of tourism must apply E-Tourism strategies in order to get more tourism income at the global competition carried to internet.

### **Instruments Used At e-Tourism**

We can say that a lot of information and communication technologies is used in E-tourism. Call Centers, Internet, Intranet and Web are the most important of these instruments. Some basic features and information that must be at the web sites of tourism enterprises can be summarized like that: (Karamustafa, Biçkes, Ulama, 2002, p.113) electronic mail feature, information about travel, having own web adress (URL), information about promotion applications and discount, feature of communicating with other tourism enterprises, feedback form feature, online payment feature, feature of informing with more than one language, audio-visual features, information about enterprise ownership, feature of replying the frequently asked questions, information about the staff and it can be updated.

## **The Reasons of the Need of e-Tourism**

1. The global competition in tourism sector is carried to internet. For this reason the countries must form competition strategies related to this trend as well as making investment on information and communication technologies.
2. Today the basic problem that the enterprises face all over the world is the decrease at the loyalty of the customers seriously. For this reason the enterprises always focus on customer satisfaction and use the method of Consumer Relation Management (CRM). CRM is very important whatever the sector is in terms of continueing the success and existence of the enterprises. For all these reasons today the tourism enterprise must focus on customer satisfaction and benefit the E-CRM strategy used in E-tourism in order to increase the customer satisfaction.
3. Internet is more effective than other commercial tools as per other commercial tools. Formerly the advertisements given to the papers and televisions are given to internet in order to be observed and because of the increasing interest.

	<b>SUPERIORITIES</b>	<b>MINORITIES</b>
<b>INTERNET</b>	Control of the effectiveness personalization(CRM), becoming widespread	Not being widespread of usage of internet
<b>PAPERS</b>	The chance of reader's looking the ad again, having the chance to advertising to small groups	Short lived
<b>TELEVISION</b>	Addressing to a large crew, have repeating chance, flexible and prestigious	High cost, temporary messages, choice deficiency
<b>DIRECT MAIL</b>	Selectivity, intense inclusion, speed, flexibility, personal, ineffective information	Expensive, customer's possible resistance, success depending on up-to-date and correct list
<b>RADI</b>	Low cost, flexibility, targeted listener, chance to prepare fast advertisement	Short lived, many parted and different listener crowd
<b>MAGAZINE</b>	Selective, quality in print, long lived	Life far away from flexibility, prestige
<b>OPEN SPACE</b>	Forward the idea fast, repetition chance, giving opportunity to local products	Very short message, and environmental concerns

**Table:1.** Comparison Of Commercial Tools

**Source:** Genel İşletme, Anadolu Üniversitesi, Eskişehir 2000, p.217

4. When looked in terms of tourism, since the easy access to the information about the arrival points can reduce the costs of travel planning and organization, marketing processes will be able to be increased and will take place faster. As such internet is an important factor with the feature of conversion of direct marketing method's potential capacity. (Egeli and Özturan, 2002)

5. Today multinational firms give their advertisements to internet instead of the instruments such as papers and television. For example the competents of McDonald's which is one of the most 20 advertiser companies in USA stated "their customers are busy with internet than watching TV the young people head these and as an advertiser company to reach this customer crowd they will transfer the millions of dollars that will be cut from the television advertisements to the firms called dot.com". the competents of Coca-Cola company stated that "they will tend to new and creative commercial instruments including electronic media". American Airlines Company has decided to increase the rate of advertisements published on internet from 6% to 9%. (Zaman, 23 Nisan 2003) As seen in table 1.2. between the years 1997 and 2001 internet has the most increase in the use commercial tools in USA with 753,3%.

	1997	2001	Change
Newspaper	41,670	51,430	23.4
Magazine	9,827	12,965	32
Television	36,893	45,070	22.2
Cable Television	7,237	13,758	90.1
Radio	13,491	20,810	54.3
Yellow Pages	11,423	14,090	23.3
Letter	36,890	49,950	35.4
Business Pages	4,109	5,310	24.8
Internet	600	5,120	753.3
Others	23,940	34,667	45

**Table 2** The Usage of Commercial Tools in USA in 1997 and 2001

**Source:** Ferrel O. C., Hirt Geoffrey, *Business*, McGraw-Hill, Fourth Edition, Irwin 2002, s.368

6. Complexity of technological changes and increasing speed of work life, increasing of the pressures on competition and wages, difficulties caused by globalization, social and demographic changes, the information workers' need of flexibility at job environment, and providing rapid development increased the need to the E-Tourism.

7. E-Tourism is a continuously growing sector because the fastest accruing information and it is the fastest developing branch of e-trade. In 1999 at a study enclosing 6000 people which is made in USA showed that 70% of internet surfers visit travel sites. 80% of these sites are airline companies and this shows that personal users use internet for airline information and reservation. (Öymen, 1999, p.17)

8. The important developments and changes that happened in economical, technological, political, socio-cultural, environmental and organizational areas in the world also affect the tourism companies closely. All these changes make some new management applications and changes necessary in the management of tourism companies. (Kozak And Güçlü 2003)

9. Online advertisement has a day by day increasing marketing share on internet which is the most important branch of E-Tourism.



**Table 3.** Online Advertisement Revenue in USA

10. The tourists examine the hotels and reserve on internet and also can buy travel from the sites of airline or bus companies and this finishes the function of agents that make interagency between the companies and people.

11. The rules and standards of traditional trade methods do not let small and middle grade companies to compete with big companies supported with high capitals. Thanks to the advantages of E-tourism small or big all companies by getting rid of the harsh rules of traditional trade methods open virtual tourism enterprises, find new markets to sell their service, get new sources of income, strengthen their images and have competing superiority. (Oral, p.202)

12. The developing technology and day by day increasing customer satisfaction causes technology take place of human source. According to Peter Rothwell, North Europe Chief of TUI in the next years call centers will take place of agents because while only one reservation will be made per day at the agents but at call centers will make five reservations. According to Rothwell especially long families will prefer mostly call centers and web sites because they are free of commission. (Türsab, 2003, p.50)

### Advantages of e-Tourism

We can summarize the advantages of e-tourism as follows. (Atalay, 2000)

1. Added value is easy access to services.
2. Providing a comparison chance easily.
3. Personalized services.
4. Travel services which are at exclusive possession of tour operators are made open for competition
5. Having the the services under the best conditions by the help of increasing competition.
6. It enables the customer get information whenever or wherever wanted.

### Tourism Sector Report Of World Tourism Organisation (WTO) And Swot Analysis Of Turkish Tourism Sector

It is impossible to have a result in tourism sector globalizing world with short term projects. If Turkey wants to get better results in tourism sector it must form long term and strong competition strategies considering the expectations in the future. Nowadays when the tourism competition slipped to internet if we do not form our long according to this we will be adjudged to lose. For this reason according to the tourism sector report prepared by

World Tourism Organisation (WTO) long term and strong strategies must be formed by well analysing the SWOT of Turkish tourism sector.

### **Tourism Sector Report Of World Tourism Organisation (WTO) and Turkey**

Tourism sector on which globalisation is the most effective grew up since it was born and is one of the most important sectors in the world. (Oral And Kurgun, 2002) According to the data of WTO in spite of the economical stagnation in the world tourism sector will increase its development. The tourist Number of 285 millions in 1980 has risen to 455 millions in 1990 and to 625 millions in 1998. The tourism income in the world has risen to 445 billions Dolars from 102 billions Dolars in this process. In 90's average increase rate in the world tourism sector is 4% in tourist and 7,2% in tourism income. According the data of WTO in 2010 1 billions 50 millions tourist Number and 1 trillions 550 billions Dolars of tourism income is reached, in 2020 these numbers will be as; 1 billion 600 millions tourists and 2 trillions Dolars of tourism income. (Turizm, 2001)

WTO calculates that tourism income will be 2 trillions Dolars in 2023, and declares that a serious change will be in tourist profile and the countries will harshly compete to attract the tourists. Turkey who hosted 11,6 millions tourists and has risen its tourism income to 8 billion Dolars must complete all the lacks that were specified by WTO. WTO declares that there will be serious changes in tourist profile till 2023, Turkey must prepare a savage tourism competition. (Köylü, 2002) The results of the study related to the basic affinities and consumer profile of next year made by WTO which takes attraction to the short term projects will have no results are as follows: (Köylü, 2002)

1. In product developing 3E (exciting, entertainment, educational) will take place of 3S (sea, sand, sun) .
2. In 2023 the sum of world tourism income will be 2 trillions Dolars and in 2000's long distance and overseas travels will increase.
3. At route choice and reservation processes information technologies (CD-ROM atlas, internet, web sites ...) will have more importance.
4. The increase at the education and comfort levels will continue and experienced tourist group will grow up.
5. Tourist choices will polarize, demand of innovation and variety will increase, comfort and adventure motifs will be predominant.
6. In paralel to rise of average human life the retirement time will lengthen and there will be more time for vacation.
7. It is expected that the singles, childless couples and 65 and older group called 3rd period will reserve more money for travel and entertainment by having predominancy in world population.

### **Swot Analysis of Turkish Tourism Sector**

Swot; is a context which is widely used in strategic management literature recently and formed from the first letters of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. In swot analysis an answer to the question "where are we now?" is seeked. The aim of this analysis to determine the strengths and weaknesses of an Organisation with its current situation and to the changes in the environment and to determine the opportunities and threats.

Expansion of Swot is like that.

Strengths : what are made well?

Weaknesses : what must be developed?

Opportunities: how can be performance increased?

Threats: what can be risk for the organisation?

Here the important point to be careful about is instead of ranking the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats one by one to find out the important data to help us to form long term strategies for our tourism sector. Because it is impossible for Turkey to get result with short term projects. The weakest point of tourism is while e-tourism gives us opportunities it is not thought to be widespread and dependable. It is still not accepted internet to be the most effective tool and having cold shoulder to internet as Turkish tourism companies is the biggest strategical mistake. When the web sites in the sector are examined the information about presentation and communication can be found but the information that must be updated are not updated. Tourism sector must invest internet. The most important point that must not be forgotten is that the companies that do not invest will not be able to compete in the sector in the future.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Importance of the sector is understood</li> <li>• The chance to live different seasons at the same time</li> <li>• Having different tourism alternatives because of its natural and cultural aspects (belief, yachting, ski tourism...)</li> <li>• Existence of young and dinamic population</li> <li>• The acceleration in tourism by EU advocacy</li> <li>• Offer the egzotic combination of East and West cultures</li> <li>• Geopolitical position</li> <li>• Not being discovered for young and over continental markets</li> <li>• Closeness to the main market with its geograhical position</li> <li>• Entrance among the developed routes in last 10 years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deficiencies in tourist health and safety</li> <li>• Disharmony of high Standard facilities with the units in close neighbourhood</li> <li>• Environmantal pollutioni</li> <li>• Tourism sector's being immediately by uncontrolled events (teror, war, etc)</li> <li>• Economical and political instability</li> <li>• E-trade's being not widespread and dependable</li> <li>• Legislation making foreign capital come harder</li> <li>• Deficiencies in strategical marketing method</li> <li>• Substructure's not responding needs caused by the rapid demand raise</li> <li>• Low Number of internet users</li> <li>• Minority of sectoral content at internet</li> <li>• The country's image is not at the expected place</li> </ul>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanding the tourism to 12 months having alternative strategy</li> <li>• As a result of customs union advantages of complete membership to EU</li> <li>• To transfer the strategies from tourist Number to tourists having high potential of spending</li> <li>• To establish economical stability</li> <li>• E-tourism's giving</li> <li>• Increase of tourist choices demanding innovation and variety</li> <li>• To increase tourism income with country presentation and advertisement</li> <li>• Providing low cost but high quality service</li> <li>• In long term offering new job and employment opportunities</li> <li>• Increase and prompt the investments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase of global competition</li> <li>• Local and global crises</li> <li>• Incorrect investments</li> <li>• To lose the competition advantage because of low efficiency</li> <li>• Deficiency of capital and hand changes at crises</li> <li>• Banking sector finds tourism sector risky</li> <li>• Not including SMEs in investment, prompt and credit</li> <li>• Structure change of tourism, 3S's replacing 3E</li> <li>• To lose the chance to be one of the biggest economies of the world</li> </ul>

**Table 4** SWOT Analysis of Turkish Tourism sector (Sahillioğlu,1998)

### Faults of Turkish Tourism in Marketing and Presentation Strategies

It can be seen that there are faults in marketing strategy when Turkish tourism is examined. Although differentiation loomed large in global competition our country is not presented enough and becomes an innocent victim of wrong competition strategies. According to Jack Trout the famous marketing theorist who came to 4th Marketing Summit "Turkey can be an opportunities country in tourism. Turkey is the meeting point of history and civilizations. To highlight this idea which is not highlighted enough is of value to Turkey. If Turkey appreciate this essence and use it well it can be a tourism heaven in the world." The declaration of Prof. Dr. Don Thompson is more noteworthy. According to Don Thompson "Turkey is the worst marketed country of the world and is an opportunity waiting to be real." Under the lights of these declarations our country must overview its marketing strategy and must implement the E-Tourism Strategy.

Turkey must transfer its strategy not to tourist Number but the tourists having more spending potential. (Kumcu, 2002) With the classical marketing used in tourism the tourist Number coming to our country increases but the tourism income does not increase as well. In order to reach the aim "in 2010 30 million tourist, 30 billion Dolars tourism income". (Dönmez, 2004) declared by Prime Minister R. Tayyip Erdoğan E-tourism strategy must be taken

into consideration. Turkey is face to face with the problem of not varying tourism sector. Although there are alternative tourism opportunities there no investments. According to World Travel And Tourism Council (WTTC) chairman Jean-Claude Baumgarten tourism affinities is in a change according to quality at tourism types like spa, golf, wellness and congress more than destinations. In the next years there will be a very important change in health tourism and people will be able to go South Africa for plastic surgeon. (Taş, 2004) Turkey is face to face with the problem of not varying the products in tourism. In today's harsh competition atmosphere the most important problem of companies and countries is not differentiating. With globalization while the all the products, all the services look the same as each other, the companies that show their difference increase their profit and the countries increase their foreign exchange income. Since Turkey has product variety to offer to the tourists it is settled for 30 products. (Köfteoğlu, 2003)

One of the most important difficulties of Turkish tourism sector is label problem. A product which is not a label yet is to be at street vender. A product which is at street vender is sold cheaper it doesn't matter how quality it is. Since our products in tourism sector could not be trademarked they are at street vender. Today while a week at a hotel in Spain is sold for over 1.000 Euros, a week at a first class holiday village or a five star hotel in Antalya is 500 Euros. In addition our price is all inclusive. (Yeni, 2003) Tom Blackett the vice-chairman of Interbrand label consultancy company which determines 100 the most valuable label of the world states that Turkey has a potential to create who-wide labels in tourism. (Arman, 2004) We must benefit information technologies to solve the label problem in tourism.

For long years the target group of Turkish tourism was foreign tourists, and the home market was not taken into consideration. (Platin, 2004) Turkey can not balance foreign and home tourism. Sector sees home tourism as alternative tourism. Turkey must revive home tourism and should balance well.

We can't increase our tourism income over a specific level by just focusing sea, sun and sand (3S) tourism. (Atakan, 2004) In our country holiday village tourism made progress. The tourists coming to our country for holiday village tourism, unfortunately perceive our country just as sea, sun and sand; they turn their country without learning anything about our country's culture and history. So we should introduce our culture and history to the tourists coming to our country.

The image problem of our country results from not being presented well enough. Today we live in information world so our country can be presented best on internet. But our past experiences show us that we have lost presentation opportunities we had. For example we lost the presentation opportunity with Eurovision Song Contest that was held in our country this year because we could not use internet. In this age a advertisement campaign that does not have internet means wasting the resources. Internet gives us the chance to give with low cost that could not be given on TV with limited time, on papers with limited space.

## **e-Tourism Application in Tourism Sector**

The rapid developments in ICT affects tourism sector deeply. Now you can watch touristic cities and sites live on internet and many people take the information about tourism and travel on internet with their computers. In this case there is a mass of information about tourism and travel, our tourism sector must develop their selling and marketing strategies on this point. Because the competition in tourism sector is carried to internet. In parallel to the developments in tourism sector education policy in our country must be restructured.

Large scale hotel enterprises can follow the developments in ICT with their structure of organisation, their advantage of scale and financial opportunities. This case gives them an advantage of global competition against the other enterprises. (Sarıışık and Akova, 2003) For example: Hilton International with 400 hotels will make new web sites in native languages in their very important markets England, Germany and Japan according to their new e-trade strategy of 13 millions of Dollars that was stated in last July. Search, choosing and reservation will be able to be made for all Hilton Hotels in the world in native languages. Another feature of these sites is that they will be designed different from each other according to that country's citizens' demands, habits and cultures. Hilton International's main (international) web site will carry on its duty the decision of designing local web sites come from the data of 4% hotel the reservations are made on internet this ratio will increase to 20% in 2007. (BThaber 2003). Moreover a study made to light the way for the future put forth 2/3 of the companies making international marketing both the global and local campaigns together according to the label they market for consideration. Hilton International's new e-trade strategy predicate this study result.

A survey made by TÜRSAB shows that e-tourism in tourism sector must be focused on immediately. 18 travel agency participated in the survey made for members of TÜRSAB giving outgoing service at home tourism sector declared that they sold travel and/or tour services to 84 thousand Turkish citizens. (Türsab Magazine, 2003)

Local Newspapers	18,6
National Newspapers	5,8
Brochure distibution	14,2
Customer Visits	14,2
Web Sites	13,7
E- mail	13,3
Other	2,9
TV- Radio Ads	2,7
Magazine Ads	1,7
Posting brochures to adresses	1,6
Fairs	1,3
Total	100

**Table 5.** Turkish Travel Agencies' Marketing Instruments

**Source:** "Yurt Dışı Seyahat Pazarı Değişiyor", Türsab Dergi, Sayı:233, Temmuz 2003, s.15

### **Advantages of e-Tourism on Turkish Tourism**

We can list the main advantages got by adopylying e-tourism to Turkish tourism sector.

1. E-Tourism is an important instruments to enter markets that are not known before, accessed and not evaluated well enough, to widen the tourism area by attracting tourist demand for other enterprises and countries
2. Globally the areas that Turkey is not known or little known are more than areas Turkey is known for. There are people who do not know Turkey in the countries where Turkey is known or people have wrong images. When looked from this aspect the presentation of Turkey at expected level is a versatile and large scale. (Aslantaş 2002) E-Tourism gives an oppotunmity to our country in this area. By this way we can give our country the image in the world it reserves.
3. E-Tourism makes marketing segmentation and market departments to be adressed be determined. With effect of ICT market is seperating into small niches, tourism is like "design your holiday" with personalizes demands.
4. In the recent years ICT that is started to be known as competition force in every area from product and service design to presentation from marketing to getting customers and selling points and became an important dimension of globalisation. In this framework the most notewothy development is the increase at the international marketing activities on internet and it is started to form the international database.
5. Globalisation process and technological developments caused an increase in international competition in tourism sector and this made tourism sector need more qualified workers. Application of e-tourism to tourism sector will make the profile of the all human force working in the sector fit global norms. With this cooperation between the enterprises in tourism will be developed. It will cause the integration and coordination arise with synergy effect by using the current resources the most rationally.
6. Nowadays with globalisation quality in tourism sector must be taken consideration more seriously. It must be perceived as a international marketing policy. Günümüzde globalleşmeyle birlikte, turizm sektöründe kalite her zamankinden daha ciddiye alınması gereken bir konu niteliği kazanmıştır. Bunun bir ulusal pazarlama politikası olarak algılanması zorunludur. To get a continuous income from tourism sector in world market is only possible with maintaining a specific service quality. (Yüksel, 2002) E-Tourism, will increase the quality of Turkish tourism sector.
7. Not being a label, one of the most important difficulties of Turkish tourism sector, can be solved by a strong E-tourism strategy. As Patel and McCharthy said "e-business models and e-transformations which do not have no aims or strategies looks like a truck which has no driver, map and arrival point on a highway," (Özmen, 2003)

### **Conclusion**

The rapid developments in ICT affects tourism sector deeply. ow you can watch touristic cities and sites live on internet and many people take the information about tourism and travel on internet with their computers. In this case there is a mass of information about tourism and travel, our tourism sector must develop their selling and marketing strategies on this point. Because the competition in tourism sector is carried to internet. In parallel to the developments in tourism sector tourism policy in our country must be restructured.

Tourism is the most dinamic sector of Turkey with its subsectors and it is a potential leader of economy. In terms of our country tourism sector is among the leading sectors which we can use technology for efficiency and



with technology we can have competition advantage. Usage of ICT in tourism sector will increase the added value of tourism sector and will promote the efficiency. Consequently the international standards can be caught in tourism sector which is important for the economy of our country.

Turkish tourism sector must follow E-Tourism strategy in order to take place in global competition and create a competition advantage. Turkey that is on the way to be a global label in the rapidly growing tourism sector in the world will reach its aim by using the tourism potential in the best way with e-tourism.

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