

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE AGRICULTURAL FAIR IN NOVI SAD FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL TOURISM

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to emphasize the importance of fairs for agricultural development and rural development with special reference to the promotion of rural tourism. It wants to point out the importance of agricultural fairs for the development of agriculture and tourism in the Republic of Serbia. The paper starts from a theoretical conceptual model of the importance of trade and communication fairs. The emphasis is on the participants of the fair in defining the concept of rural tourism development. The surveys conducted are based on the application of specific cognition and marketing research methods through a questionnaire. Special methods are analysis and logical deduction. The conclusion is that informing the participants of the fair can make a communication effort and emphasize the importance of tourism and rural tourism. Adhering to the research recommendations will allow increasing the role, importance and effects of the agricultural fair as a strategic instrument, will facilitate the elimination of doubts and overcome obstacles related to the economic importance of rural tourism. That will lead to the acceptance of the model of promotion of rural tourism by the fair, exhibitors and visitors to the fair.

Keywords: *agricultural fair, model, effects, rural tourism*

Introduction

Trade shows are one of the oldest market institutions in commodity trade. The first fairs were created during religious festivals, so the name also has an etymological source in certain foreign languages. With the development of social relations, productive forces and traffic, the role of fairs is becoming increasingly important. Trade shows have had a special role in trade after the Industrial Revolution. By increasing the international role of

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trade fairs in transport and trade, their importance is growing as a driver of service development and the beginnings of tourism. With the growth of international exchange, the number of people leaving permanent places of residence making a certain contribution to tourism of that age is increasing. For over 1,500 years, trade shows have been the primary mechanism for converting merchandise into money and vice versa. They were the world banking system (Chapman, 1995).

Due to market factors and scientific and technological developments, the development of new and higher quality products enabled the development of trade and other services such as tourism services. Specialized fairs in the new economic conditions represent a constant market for trade. Tourism fairs, by definition, facilitate service trade in tourism and are an integral part of promoting rural tourism in a particular region. However, the aim of this paper is to show how the International Agricultural Fair in Novi Sad can influence the development of tourism and rural tourism, given its importance, the number of international and domestic exhibitors, the large number of posters and the agricultural region in which it is located. It should be noted that the city of Novi Sad itself, in cooperation with the fair, could promote tourism potentials and tourism of the surrounding rural areas. The aim of the research is to gather primary information that will enable us to understand the specifics of the application of marketing communication mix in domestic (local) wine producers, as well as to understand the role and importance of fairs as an instrument of sales promotion and marketing communication. For the purpose of successful research, it is necessary to find out the motives, perceptions and tendencies of consumers and customers in the choice of specific products of manufacturers and their brands (Prdić, 2019).

The research is based on the application of specific cognition and marketing research methods that are conditioned by the problem in question. Marketing research methods use a comparative method using historical and testing methods. Qualitative data were collected through a survey method with a questionnaire at the International Agricultural Fair in Novi Sad held from May 11-17, 2019. The survey included 20 exhibitors from domestic wine producers and 100 visitors who visited the stand of wine producers. Specific methods used in the paper are analysis and synthesis, logical deduction and statistical data processing. These methods, as well as the special analysis of the importance of fairs in the developed countries, their own professional and scientific experience of the author of this paper will contribute to the successful result by emphasizing the

importance of the Agricultural Fair for the development of domestic agriculture. By defining the role of the fair in increasing trade, it also provided the knowledge that contributes to the fact that the tourism promotion model by the fair, exhibitors and visitors can contribute to the development of tourism in the city and rural tourism in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina.

Agricultural Fair in Novi Sad

According to the Novi Sad Fair at the International Agricultural Fair held from May 11-17, 2019, 140,000 visitors, 1518 exhibitors from 32 countries, as well as a large number of tourism and insurance agencies visited the fair (Novosadski sajam, 2019).

The Novi Sad Fair, organized as an institution by the International Agricultural Fair, is a geographical, market and institutional venue for achieving the goals of the fair, businesses and visitors. The Agricultural Fair is a kind of brand that allows the trade and concentration of a large market in the agricultural sector (Kuzman & Prdić, 2020).

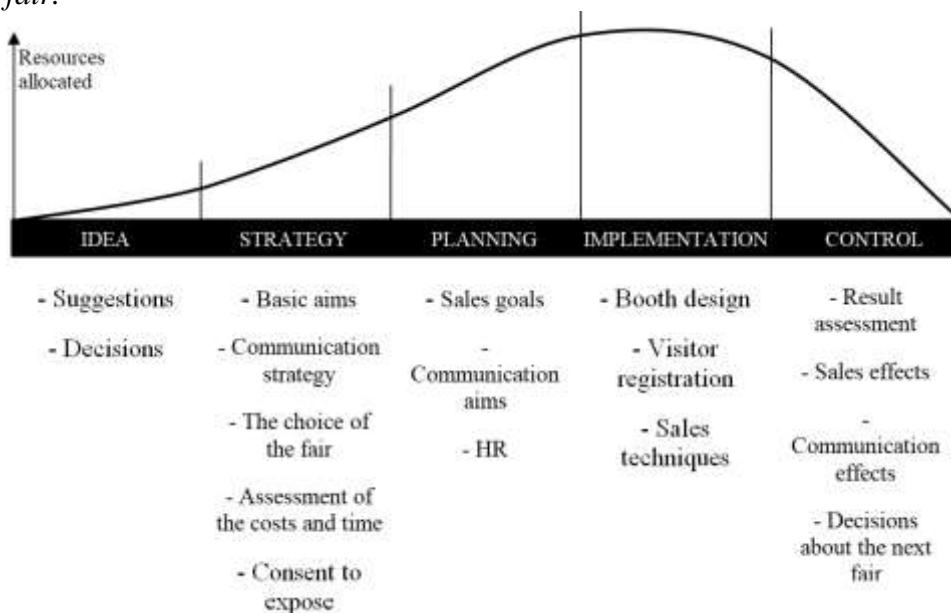
The management, implementation and implementation of a marketing strategy for rural tourism development should be based on the common interests of different stakeholders (Grubor et al., 2019). Based on the views of the previous authors, all of the above, a unique conclusion is that the International Agricultural Fair in Novi Sad has objective conditions for the development of trade, tourism and regional tourism.

Success model for tourism and rural tourism development at the fair

The primary aim of the paper is to present the current state of the Agricultural Fair in Novi Sad in terms of its role and importance for agricultural development, and to determine certain assumptions for improving the market position in terms of emphasizing the importance of tourism and rural tourism both by the fair and exhibitors and visitors fair. The intention is to systematize existing knowledge through theoretical considerations and to propose an adequate model of efficiency based on our own research and experience. In order to be relevant to the research and efficiency of the company at the fair in our example of domestic wine producers, it is necessary to anticipate all activities in the appearance of the company at the fair, namely the planning, organization, implementation and control of the results achieved, as shown in Figure 1. These basic

management functions show the ability of the company to measure the results achieved at the fair based on the chosen strategy and goals.

Figure 1: *The life cycle of the project is the appearance of companies at the fair.*



Source: Prdić, N. (2018). *Sajmovi, komunikacija, prodaja* [Fairs, Communications, Sales], Prometej, Novi Sad.

Meeting economic and communication goals are measures for effectiveness of the show. It is very important to note that the need to evaluate and control the results achieved at the fair is necessary because of limited resources for investment. Based on Figure 1. we can conclude that the evaluation of the achieved results is a thoughtful activity in the realization of the project of the appearance of the companies at the fair in our case of domestic wine producers in order to compare the planned with the achieved goals.

Mount Fruška Gora is considered a relevant production area because of the importance and influence for the development of the Agricultural Fair in Novi Sad. The wine market in our country is quite attractive, so participation at the fair aims at increasing sales and production. The aim of the test is to collect information on a sample of 20 producers of Fruška Gora wines that will enable understanding of the specificities of Fruška Gora wines. Adequate marketing strategy for the fair, in addition to achieving

economic and communication effects, can contribute to the development of tourism and rural tourism in Fruška Gora. By designed communication and understanding of the wishes of the visitors of the fair, wine producers can economically realize the contacts they made and improve communication after the fair and between two fairs. The development of tourism and rural tourism after obtaining information and research at the fair must be an integral part of the marketing strategy for the sale and communication of these companies with the market. When it comes to the capital structure, the survey data are as follows:

- 83% private equity of domestic origin,
- 11% mixed capital of domestic and foreign origin
- 6% state capital.

Survey data show that the capital structure is dominated by private equity of domestic origin (83%), while 11% is in mixed ownership of enterprises, and 6% is state capital where ownership, bankruptcy, etc. are not resolved. On the basis of the above data, further investigations were made with wine producers of private domestic capital. When asked if the company had a clearly defined marketing strategy for appearing at the fair, the answer was as follows:

- Yes - 19%
- No – 81%.

From the obtained data, we may conclude that domestic companies do not have a clearly defined strategy for appearing at the fair and what marketing communication means they can attract potential customers. It is necessary to clearly define the strategy of performance by applying all managerial functions through the realization of the project of appearing at the fair. The results of the research regarding the importance of tourism and rural tourism of wine producers from Fruška Gora are as follows: Does the Agricultural Fair contribute to increasing your sales:

- Yes – 38%
- No – 62%.

Would sales increase if the Agricultural Fair promoted tourism and rural tourism in the city and Fruška Gora:

- Yes – 75%
- Perhaps – 17%
- No – 8%.

The research conducted has made it clear that the marketing strategy is underdeveloped and is regarded as a "cost" rather than an investment. Based on the aforementioned facts, the conclusion is that domestic wine producers must adopt a strategy of appearance at the fair in the form of carrying out all necessary activities for the realization of the performance. These studies show that producers understand the importance of the Agricultural Fair in terms of increasing sales and achieving overall economic indicators. A large number of respondents (75%) consider the importance of promoting the importance of the tourism of the city and the rural tourism of Fruška Gora, which can contribute to the increase of sales of their products.

From the above it can be concluded that the Agricultural Fair can contribute to the increase in sales of wine producers, as well as that the strategy of development of city tourism and rural tourism in Fruška Gora contributes to the overall economic progress of the wine producers.

The research also needs to find out the importance of customer size, which is reflected in the volume of products purchased and used as a basic variable to calculate the importance of customers for the business. It is important to emphasize that the sample size data does not distinguish between visitors who visited the fair but not the booth of the observed company and those who did not visit the fair at all (Prdić et al., 2014).

From the above, we can conclude that the data analysis covered only the attitudes and perceptions of the booth visitors of these companies based on the problem in question. The basis for making decisions for the sales and communication strategy with the target public.

The process of meaningful visitor registration is one of the essential elements of direct communication with the aim of discovering the type of visitors of particular importance, the ability to purchase and other visitors that may be of importance to the exhibitor company. One of the most important elements of a communication strategy for attracting visitors is the design of a booth that represents the identity of the company. The pleasant ambience at the wine producer's stand is a basic prerequisite for the demonstration and wine tasting. Recording the visitors to the booth by its importance is crucial. It is important to distinguish if they belong to the groups large-scale, medium or small-scale purchase customers. One of the important elements is the logging of visitors with respect to the importance of the company and the range of its products (Table 2).

Table 1: *Visitor registration form at the fair stand*

GLYNWED LTD. – INTERNATIONAL FAIR																				
Your name: _____		The Fair day: _____		Date: _____			Time: _____													
<p>Fill in the lines immediately above. Then, triple-click the vertical columns below for each visitor to the booth you interviewed, no matter how brief the conversation. (See back for definitions)</p>																				
1. TYPE OF VISITOR		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 – 20																		
a. Of particular importance		<table border="1"> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>																		
b. Possibility of purchase		<table border="1"> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>																		
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2. THE IMPORTANCE (when during the year)		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 – 20																		
a. Very big (5000 and more)		<table border="1"> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>																		
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e. No particular significance or ability to buy		<table border="1"> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>																		
3. PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 – 20																		
a. Detailed info about at least one of our products		<table border="1"> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>																		
b. General knowledge of our product range		<table border="1"> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>																		
c. No prior knowledge of our products		<table border="1"> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>																		

Source: Prdić, N. (2018). *Sajmovi, komunikacija, prodaja* [Fairs, Communications, Sales], Prometej, Novi Sad.

The answers to the specific question: "Do you consume wine?", that the visitors of the stand of domestic wine producers at the 86th International Agricultural Fair were asked, were the following:

- Yes - 81%
- No - 19%

The survey data show that 81% of respondents are wine consumers and 19% are not, which shows that a large number of visitors use these products, and that producers have to define and implement an adequate marketing strategy for sales and communication with consumers and potential wine consumers. When asked if price is an important factor when deciding to buy wine the answers were the following:

- Yes - 65%
- No - 35%

Based on previous research, we can see that price (65%) as an instrument of the marketing mix is a very important element when deciding to buy wine. Through communication and direct trade at the fair, wine producers find common interest with consumers when it comes to price.

When it comes to the quality of different wines as well as packaging, the consumer response of the stand visitors is as follows:

- Yes – very important 79%
- Yes – all I care about is the quality 15%
- Yes – I care about the manufacturer's brand 6%.

In addition to price, product quality is the most important marketing mix instrument that can affect sales value. A satisfactory level of quality is one for which the consumer is willing to allocate certain funds. With the satisfactory quality of the product, the consumer is ready to personally visit the place of production and directly convince of the production methodology and the quality of the wine. Based on the above, we may conclude that by visiting the company, the consumer also becomes a tourist who will certainly get to know all the tourist potentials of Fruška Gora.

The answers to the specific question: "Are you satisfied with the International Agricultural Fair and is it significant for the development of tourism in the city of Novi Sad?", were the following:

- Yes - 69%
- Yes if promoted well - 28%
- No – 3%.

The above data show that a large number of respondents (69%) think that the fair is important for the development of tourism in the city, while (28%) believe that the need is a good strategy of communication of the fair with exhibitors, visitors, decision makers, expert and scientific public.

To the specific question whether the International Agricultural Fair in Novi Sad contributes to the development of rural tourism in AP Vojvodina, the answers were as follows:

- Yes – 48% because of the close proximity of Fruška Gora
- Yes – 28% because of the great number of country farms in the vicinity
- Yes – 24% because of the Danube and all of its potentials

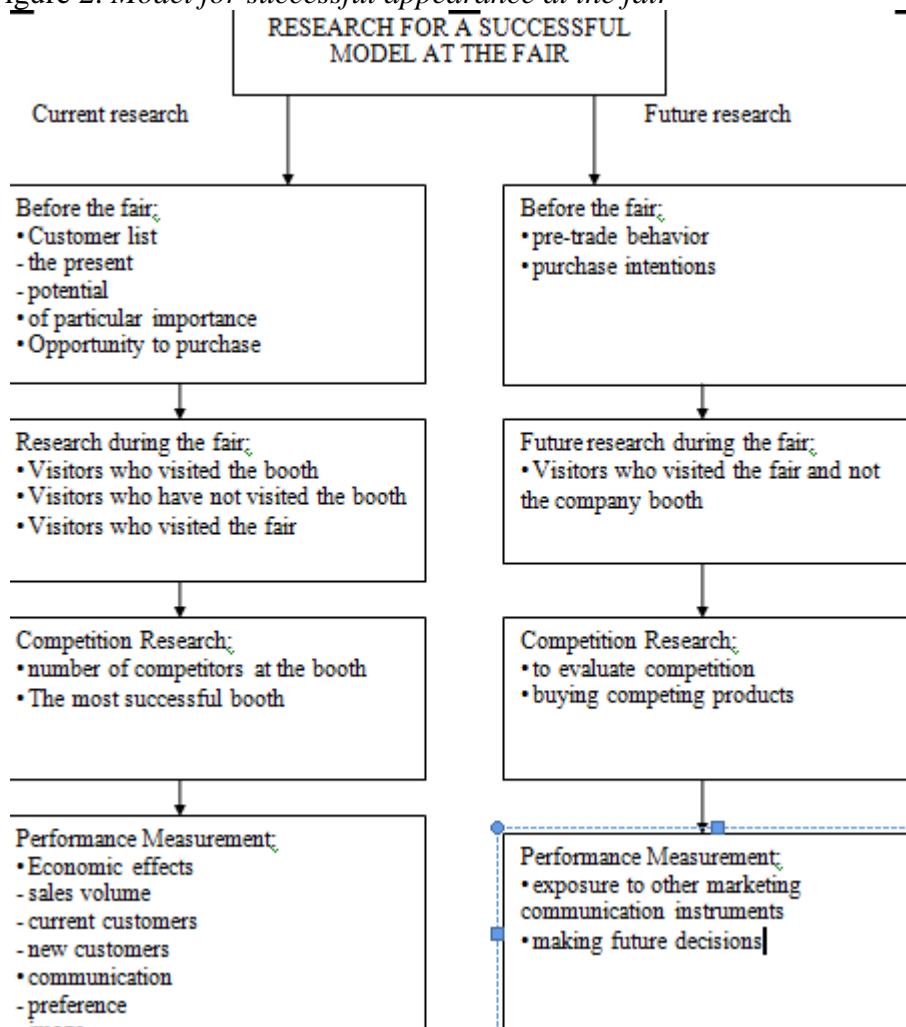
The analysis of the results shows that the fair as the organiser is in need of an adequate strategy of communication with the visitors of the fair, as well as a marketing strategy of the company exhibiting domestic wine producers. Based on the results, it can be concluded that the Agricultural Fair is unique in pursuing the interests of the fair, the city, exhibitors and visitors of the fair. The aforementioned statement may be considered relevant because of the interconnection of stakeholders' interests when it comes to wine sales, urban tourism development and rural tourism in the region. The aforementioned research shows that domestic companies and the fair should reconcile economic interests and inform the overall visitors of the fair about the tourism potential and importance of rural areas for the development of the region and the state through communication instruments.

Recommendations for adopting a tourism and rural tourism development model at the fair

The International Agricultural Fair in Novi Sad has all the prerequisites for the realisation of the goals of the fair, exhibitors and visitors. The research for a successful model of a company's participation at the fair (Figure 2) shows the basic prerequisites for successful participation in meeting the overall goals of the company. The example given in Figure 2 is just a basic prerequisite that can be one of the strategies for measuring the effects of onset. By analysis and research, it is necessary to determine the activities that have to be undertaken before the fair and during the fair for potential buyers to come to the booth of the company. For a good assessment of the interests of the company, it is necessary to find out the type, structure and quality of visitors as well as to find out what their purchase intentions are. The research needs to find out what the visitors' views are about the competition products and what communication activities are undertaken after the fair. These data serve to achieve the economic and communication goals of the company by appearing at the fair, as well as information that will allow changing the strategy of appearing at the next fair and comparing the fair with other marketing communication instruments.

Organizing a clearly selected fair and defining goals is necessary for the company to define its activities precisely. Precisely defined goals clearly guide the complete plan of immediate activities for the implementation of the performance project. Clearly defined and well-defined goals to be achieved are the basis for measuring and determining the success of the company at the fair as an instrument of sales promotion (Prdić, 2012).

Figure 2: *Model for successful appearance at the fair*



Source: Prdić, N. (2018). *Sajmovi, komunikacija, prodaja* [Fairs, Communications, Sales], Prometej, Novi Sad.

Therefore, planning is the basic function of the realisation of the agricultural fair in this case. The plan must be precisely defined based on

precisely defined economic and communication objectives. Based on the previous paragraph and the subject of the research, the key goals are to achieve economic effects but also good communication based on which the wine producer can establish such a relationship that customers visit the company only. The natural resources of Fruška Gora is certainly the fact that it is a tourist destination. Following the contents of the Tourist Organisation of the city, it is possible to visit the so-called "Wine Roads" as well as numerous monasteries of Fruška Gora.

The research hypothesis that strategic approach to trade fairs leads to an increase in business efficiency and competitiveness of two relevant world fairs, applying competitive methods based on distribution composition, on the basis of which the exhibitor company can choose a fair that, by its market status, enables the exhibitor company to achieve the planned goals was confirmed (Prdić, 2017).

One of the preconditions for a successful performance strategy involves choosing a fair. A properly selected fair is a basic prerequisite for meeting economic and communication goals. When it comes to the Agricultural Fair in Novi Sad, it has competitive advantages over fairs in the region. However, the fair conditions themselves are not a prerequisite for achieving the goals. It is necessary that the fair itself have an adopted strategy of mutual communication of exhibitors in this case wine producers and visitors who have an interest in visiting all the tourism potential of the region. These strategies can be organised together with the City Tourism Organisation. The Agricultural Fair in Novi Sad can, in an organised manner, enable visitors to visit tourist potentials and rural agricultural areas for tourism purposes. In the example of the Austrian wine market, higher quality wines are produced by large companies in comparison with smaller companies united in cooperatives (Pennerstorfer & Weiss, 2012).

The previous example indicates the size of a business and its potential in the market. The example of Austrian wine producers points to a market organization in which large companies have succeeded in marketing strategy to control much of the market over smaller ones. Prior knowledge may give impetus to small domestic producers to adopt an adequate marketing strategy to increase sales and joint exports. Adjusting the production system for the export of agricultural products creates the necessary conditions for irrigation to be an economic stabilisation factor that enables exports and significant revenues (Mihailović et al., 2014).

The creation of all conditions of production, and especially of the region of AP Vojvodina, which borders the Danube River, points to the fact that the conditions of production and a healthy environment are the engine of progress and development. Exporting wine products from a known geographical area can boost production and investment. By creating production and economic conditions on the Danube River as well as the potential of Fruška Gora, it is possible to reconcile the wine production strategy and the tourism and rural tourism development strategy.

The analysis can lead to the necessary conclusions in the Novi Sad agglomeration that in 2012-2014 the air was clean or slightly compressed, while in 2015 the pollution moved into the second category (moderate), which indicates a trend of suspended particles growth (Cvijanović & Matijašević, 2017).

A healthy environment allows for a better life, a better quality product and a more frequent stay in nature. These natural conditions must be preserved by taking action on environmental protection, nature conservation, and tourism development. Long-term competitive advantage in the tourism market and managing the supply and demand relationship require understanding of a number of factors and identifying key trends in the tourism market (Freitag & Pyka, 2011).

The competitive strategy of caring for dominance in the tourism market when it comes to the subject matter of this paper indicates the link of a quality product from a healthy environment with the success of product sales and increasing the utilisation of tourism potentials. Important criteria for choosing a tourism product are health, safety and security. Analysing contemporary social trends, we may conclude that the increase in health culture has a positive effect on the increase in demand for healthy products and services that are in the function of preserving the quality of life and health (Stanković et al., 2012)

In modern market conditions, the production of healthy products, where consumption in moderation includes wine, allows the development of tourism and health tourism according to the criteria of the World Health Organization. When we know that Fruška Gora also has spa potentials, unique nature and monasteries, the focus on healthy products and healthy living certainly brings success. The future development of the International Agricultural Fair in Novi Sad as a strategic instrument for the development of tourism and rural tourism is based on realistic market indicators and

natural resources. Leadership of the Agricultural Fair in the region means giving up short-term and annual development plans and creating a strategy and preconditions for development with all participants of the fair, the city based on long-term partnerships. The aim of these changes is to synergize activities with other stakeholders and to promote tourism and rural tourism as a fair development strategy. The conclusion is that the fair must adopt a development model based on competitive advantage and the application of information technology in communication. The strategy of developing the fair based on the competitive advantage and the strategy of development of urban and rural tourism is the strategy of development of the city and the surrounding rural areas. Therefore, developing a fair as well as tourism and rural tourism must be a reality and a long-term business goal. The adoption of the aforementioned strategy and its practical implementation in business will create the necessary conditions and remove obstacles to the development of the Agricultural Fair and the tourist industry.

Conclusion

The conducted research has made it possible to achieve the basic goal of the work that the International Agricultural Fair in Novi Sad is a place where the interests of the fair companies of exhibitors and visitors of the fair can be realised. The importance of fairs in the market-developed countries was pointed out, as well as the prerequisites for the implementation of the model and the concept of the importance of the agricultural fair for the development of tourism in the city, the rural tourism of Mount Fruška Gora and the Danube region. If we know that the work starts from the theoretical concept of the importance of trade and communication fairs, we can conclude that the participants of the fair can achieve their goals in the domestic market. The model, which entails defining the agricultural fair as an event venue, and its contribution to the effects of business, fits into the framework. The framework contributes to the importance of the fair for the development of trade and sales of enterprises of domestic wine producers and other participants of the fair who see the fair as a place of construction competitive position and achievement of planned goals. The research proved that the economic success of the fair depends on the business ability to organise the fair in both domestic and regional and other markets. Achieving the goals of domestic wine producers presupposes the possibility of using the fair as a strategic instrument that will enable a better competitive position in the market and establish such relationships with consumers, where long-term partnerships can be established based on satisfying their interests. This role

of agricultural fair and domestic wine producers will create conditions for promotion of the fair as a place for pursuing economic interests, as well as interests of tourism services. By accepting the fact of importance of the fair for the development of tourism and rural tourism, the city and the region, it will create the necessary conditions that enable the fair's role as an event venue where the participants of the fair can achieve their goals. The conducted research concluded that most companies of domestic wine producers do not have a defined marketing strategy for appearing at the fair. The results of the survey show that 75% of enterprises believe that the Agricultural Fair can be a place for promotion of tourism and rural tourism, but 62% of the respondents believe that the fair does not contribute to the increase of sales. From the above, it can be concluded that domestic wine producers must define the marketing strategy of appearing at the fair in terms of increasing sales. The realised communication at the fair can contribute to the development of rural tourism at the place of production of wine, which in the end can certainly affect the overall business result. When analysing consumer attitudes of visitors to the booth, 81% of them consume wine. The data also shows that the price is a significant factor in the marketing mix for buying decisions for 65% of the respondents, as well as the quality for which 79% of respondents confirmed importance. Visitors to the booth of the company have a positive attitude of 69% that the International Agricultural Fair can contribute to the development of tourism in the city. Regarding the development of rural tourism in AP Vojvodina, 48% of respondents believe that the fair contributes to the development of rural tourism due to the proximity of Fruška Gora, 28% of them said it was due to the large number of traditional farmhouses, and 24% that it was due to the proximity of the Danube and all potentials that can be used for the development of rural tourism.

The conducted researches made it possible to achieve the goal of work in terms of emphasising the importance of fairs in market developed countries and in our country, stated the importance of the International Agricultural Fair as an instrument for increasing business sales and determined the assumption for the implementation of the concept of developing the fair as a place for tourism and rural tourism development. Bearing in mind that the main objective of the paper focuses on the role, importance and effects of the Agricultural Fair as a strategic instrument for increasing the role and importance of tourism and rural tourism development on the one hand, the paper also focuses on the results of an empirical study of the economic status of local wine producers from the Fruška Gora area on the other. On the other hand, it is necessary to anticipate and identify all obstacles that

contribute to improving the market position of the company by appearing at the fair. Respecting the empirical research of consumer attitudes of visitors to the stand of wine producers at the fair will eliminate dilemmas and overcome barriers of fair participants regarding the economic importance of rural tourism, which will contribute to and lead to the acceptance of tourism promotion and rural tourism models by fair participants.

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