

Outlook for Travel to Britain

- The Winter season is a quiet time for travel to Britain from Hungary as 'winter' travelers go to ski for the neighbour countries or exotic countries. So it is expected that there will be decrease in number of visits in quarter 4 compared to quarters 2 & 3 to the UK.

Britain in the News

- The extent of H1N1 (swine) flu cases in Britain received wide-spread media coverage in the summer but the focus quickly moved to the situation in Hungary after more and more Hungarians got the flu. Currently only local numbers, facts can be heard in the news.
- There was some news about the Cumbria Flooding but not from a tourism point of view.

General Market Mood

- After Gordon Bajnai PM– the former minister for national development and economy – executed the first of the anti-crisis measures and structural reforms aimed at achieving financial stability, fiscal consolidation and the eventual adoption of Euro, which included reductions in pensions and public-sector wages, as well as taxation changes for 2009. This underlined that Hungary was not yet out of the economic crisis and argued that the anti-crisis policy needed to be incorporated in the 2010 budget as well.
- The budget for 2010 would be based on tax cuts and its priorities would be preserving public safety and employment.
- As there will be elections in spring 2010, parties have been starting to focus on their campaign messages, this will influence the financial and economical status of Hungary.

Consumer Behaviour

- Because of the economic crisis and the anti-crisis measures, including VAT increase from 20% to 25% as of 1 July, more people spent their vacations in Hungary this summer and most of the people wait until the last minute to book their vacation for rest of the year.

Media Matters

- The largest social media network is iwiw (Hungarian) and has 1.3 million daily users but Facebook, which has 600,000 users, increased by 33% during the quarter.
- A mistaken post by Vodafone on twitter, got huge publicity on social media and news portals, Hungarians have just realized the power of social media.
- As the frequency usage right of the two main commercial radio stations expired in November and they were unable to extend it. Two newly established stations have won the rights and this has got big publicity. Many Hungarians have started to listen the new radio stations (Neo & Class FM). The online radio listeners are above 2 million.

Routes and Fares

- Malev has new pricing strategy: try to reach more people with their half-price ticket campaigns during the whole year and has become much more active in their offline and online communication.
- All airlines try to motivate the consumers to buy flight tickets now so many deep discounts can be found on the market.
- Ryanair decided to restart its Budapest – Glasgow flights from March 2010.

Business Tourism

- Because of the economic crisis the travel agencies are focusing on staying in business and maintaining themselves so there were neither new comers nor exits from the market.
- Due to the economic crises airlines reported 10-20% less turnover which is mainly due to the lower volume of business travellers, costs savings by the corporate sector, cheaper tickets instead of the business class fares.

Leisure Travel Trade

- Although city breaks/packages were expected to suffer this year with Hungarians cutting down their second and third trips, it seems that leisure booking figures are on more or less the similar level than last year. This is mainly due to special offers with drastic reductions for accommodation across Europe.

Competitor Activity

- Hungarian Tourism Board launched the "Year of the festivals 2010" photo competition in September 2009.
- Austrian Tourism Board has a Hungarian Facebook channel on which they are running an 'Advent calendar' giving interesting information and suggestions for travel destinations.
- Hungarian Tourism Board has a big online and offline integrated winter campaign (Budapest Winter Invitation) where due to their hotel partners, they provide free extra nights. The message is: the longer you stay the more you save! Last year they had a similar campaign with big success.

VisitBritain Activity Update

- VisitBritain Hungary had its first Travel Trade Workshop and Press Breakfast on 23 & 24 November. 18 UK participants, 20 local travel agencies and 14 journalists also participated on the event.
- VisitBritain Hungary localized the campaign site of Britain led Cities campaign.
- VisitBritain Hungary localized the campaign site of Sherlock Holmes promotion.
- VisitBritain Hungary had Sherlock Holmes press trip in Manchester and Liverpool between 10 and 13 December.
- VisitBritain Hungary sent out its first B2B trade e-Newsletter in the end of September with a 24% open rate

Upcoming activity

- Sherlock Holmes film promotion from 18 December 2009.
- Britain-Led Cities campaign with easyJet from 1 February 2010.
- Gastronomic press trip in Scotland in February 2010.
- Sending out B2C and B2B trade eNewsletters.

Who's in Town?

- Nothing to report for October to December.