

How to Celebrate the 115th Anniversary of the Establishment of Mamaia Resort by Using Public Relations Tools

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Abstract

Marketing communication is experiencing a permanent process of development determined by changes in people's lifestyles, changes in customer behavior, all of these generated by the remarkable evolution recorded in the field of communication technology. Organizations are reconfiguring their marketing communication strategies in order to address the stakeholders, using modern marketing techniques, able to combine customer involvement, motivation and emotions. Public relations has become an increasingly present tool in organizations' communication structure in all fields of activity, and organizing events holds a significant share. The focus on public relations and marketing events is based on their specific features, what distinguishes them from other communication techniques and gives them certain advantages for any organization. The aim of this study is to suggest the importance of drafting a communication strategy for Mamaia resort, which in the summer of 2021 will celebrate 115 years of activity.

Key words: public relations, marketing events, Mamaia resort, Romania 2021

J.E.L. classification: L26, M 30, M 31, M37, Q26, Z32

1. Introduction

The entire human society is constantly changing, a change generated by an array of factors, among which the advancement in science and technology plays an important role. The development and modernization of the organizations' communication activity with their customers is obviously necessary and, at the same time, very important for ensuring their success. In the current context, organizations are compelled to rethink their marketing activities and strategies, increasingly integrating new digital and social media, combining them appropriately with the traditional marketing techniques and correlating them with lifestyle changes and consumer behavior. Permanently, the organization, through its entire activity, conveys a message to customers, whether in a positive, negative or neutral way, but it must watch carefully when, to whom and what it communicates, because the image, reputation and success of the organization depend on these aspects.

2. Theoretical background

The digital age offers a variety of new information and communication tools, which have an impact on the promotion and marketing communication activity. New marketing concepts highlight these aspects.

Relational marketing brings to attention the pursuit of establishing long-term relationships with the stakeholders, the orientation from occasional transactions to stable, long-term business relationships, with positive economic, social and psychological effects (Kotler; Armstrong, 2015, pp. 5,7,17,25).

About *integrated marketing communication* one can say that it acts on two levels: convincing the customer to purchase a brand, then securing the loyalty of the customer towards that brand (Rogojinaru. 2004, p.32). Integrated marketing communication determines the organization to carefully integrate all its communication channels (advertising, sales forces, public relations, sales

promotion with direct and digital marketing) in order to send a clear, positive and convincing message, in all the points of contact between the customer and the organization (and its brands) (Kotler; Armstrong, 2015, pp. 373, 377). Public relations, as a marketing tool, is considered to have had a more limited use, until recently. Around the mid-90's, the first practical and academic attempts appeared in Romania (Rogojinaru, 2004, pp. 7-8). There is a multitude of opinions expressed by international specialists regarding the content of public relations. In a clear manner, the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) stated in 1988 that "Public relations helps an organization and its publics adapt mutually to each other" (Curtin; Gaither, 2008, pp.18-19). Particular aspects of this marketing tool include the orientation towards influencing public opinion and behavior, gaining customer trust and credibility for the organization and its brands, stimulating the active role of customers in public relations messages and campaigns, from the perspective of the new technologies. At the same time, public relations involves activities of effective communication with the public and concerns which show responsibility towards employees, local community and the environment. These are steps that help create a solid image, reputation and ensure the success of the organization. (Cerkez, 2002, pp.6-7,10). Public relations is used to promote products, people, places, ideas, activities and even nations (Kotler; Armstrong, 2015, p. 397). Public relations practices differ from other marketing activities in the way they are organized in the context of a specific situation, aiming to educate / influence customer preferences (Rogojinaru, 2004, pp.114, 116-117), but also stimulating them to express their feelings. People need to communicate with each other, and the new technologies provide them with various possibilities of communication. In this context, one can notice that marketing specialists seek to capitalize on the new technologies in order to stimulate people to interact with each other, but also with the organization / brand through new forms of manifestation: posting reviews, comments, broadcasting videos on social networks, etc. (Kotler; Armstrong, 2015, pp. 397-398).

The main tools used in public relations are news and events. On the one hand, a goal is to look for favorable news about the organization, and on the other hand to organize events capable of generating positive news.

Events are not a creation of the present, specialists believing that events have existed since the time of ancient Rome (Schafer-Mehdi, 2008, pp. 9, 27), but marketing has capitalized on them as a communication tool.

Events can be classified into natural events (organized on the occasion of the anniversary / founding of an organization, inauguration of a new location, launch of a product / service) and special events (economic, social, scientific, cultural, sports) (Kotler; Armstrong, 2015, pp. 399-400).

Marketing events must be analyzed according to their complex character / content: they determine the dialogue, the interaction between the organization and the customers, as well as among the customers; they create emotion, motivation, action so that customers become active participants; they have a more intense and lasting effect (compared to other marketing techniques) because they address all the customers' senses; they can be determined by economic, psychological, social factors (Schafer-Mehdi, 2008, pp. 27-29, 42-43). In the current period, marketing events can take place through a variety of actions, from the traditional ones: organizing conferences, speeches, traveling shows, launches; printing of written materials-brochures, newsletters, magazines, catalogs, articles; company identity materials (contract forms, payment documents, uniforms, cars) to modern / digitalized ones: audio-visual materials (DVDs, online movies), websites, blogs and social media (You Tube, Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter, etc.) (Kotler; Armstrong, 2015, pp. 399-400).

These aspects explain the interest of organizations in intensifying the extensive use of marketing events.

3. Research methodology

In the elaboration of this study, we have used qualitative marketing research, based on secondary information collected, using a longitudinal profile, from sources representing documents, mass media articles, publications published in the late nineteenth-early twentieth century, but we have also accessed information from online data sources. The processing consisted

in interpreting these data, in an attempt to reconstruct, in this way, the economic and social reality of the city of Constanța, in the period after Dobrudja's return to the Romanian Principalities, following the War of Independence, concluded in 1878. Furthermore, the analysis of secondary information, representing the approaches of specialists regarding public relations has been the starting point for the development of proposals for the organization of the 115th anniversary of the establishment of Mamaia beach.

4. Data, results, and discussion

The research carried out for the elaboration of this study has allowed us to obtain a large volume of information, whose processing was directed towards the analysis of the connection between the development of port and tourist activity in Constanța, while the establishment of Mamaia beach is precisely the result of the pursuit to keep the city as a port and tourist resort.

4.1. Tomis – a natural port on the Black Sea

In order to understand Constanța as a current tourist city, we consider that we must go back in time and bring to attention several relevant aspects. The history of Constanța begins, according to the specialists, approximately in the 6th century BC, when the Greeks founded on a promontory (DEX, 1998, p. 858), a colony called Tomis (initially in the form of an emporion, respectively of a fair organized in a foreign country, in addition to a maritime stopover) (Păuleanu, 2006, p. 5).

The geographical positioning was, from the very beginning, the aspect which drew the attention of Greek navigators and represented an opportunity for a future human settlement / city. The configuration of the place - elevated territory, with the appearance of a trapezoidal peninsula, surrounded on three sides by the waters of the Black Sea, seems to have been a natural port which provided living conditions to the Geto-Dacian population, but also possibilities for ships' anchorage (due to the sheltered opening, formed on the south-eastern direction) (Păuleanu, 2006, p. 10). After the Greek colonization, the Black Sea began to be capitalized on as "a link between peoples, a factor of progress" (Păuleanu, 2006, pp. 8, 107). The opening to the sea, representing the access to the world, could explain the continuing interest in Constanța.

Without going into the details of the history of this city, we recall that during its long existence it was, in turn, a Greek colony, a Roman colony, invaded by several migrant peoples, then for about 450 years it was under Ottoman rule, and since 1878, following the War of Independence, it returned (together with the Dobrudja region) to its country of origin (today's Romania). Also, the city was completely destroyed several times, but it had the ability to be reborn every time (Păuleanu, 2006, p. 5).

About the modern period of development of the city of Constanța one can say that it started in the middle of the 19th century and was mainly due to the construction of the railway (Constanța-Cernavodă, in the period 1858-1864), as well as of the Cernavodă bridge over the Danube (1890-1895). These investments in infrastructure elements ensured the connection between the city of Constanța (implicitly, also the Dobrudjan area) and the Romanian Principalities, but also a bridge between the West and the East (Duployen, 1933; Păuleanu, 2006, p. 64).

There followed a period when the local and national leadership were concerned with the development of the port, considered, ever since 1850 by Ion Ionescu de la Brad, as a way "to extract Constanța from ruin and inactivity" (Păuleanu, 2006, pp. 61, 69). Right from the first visit to Constanța, in October 1879, King Carol I drew attention to the importance of the development of the seaport (Păuleanu, 2006, p. 78). In 1889, the works for the extension of the port of Constanța began, under the coordination of engineer Anghel Saligny. The entire subsequent evolution of the city of Constanța took into account the development of its port and balneary functions (Păuleanu, 2006, p. 127).

The effects of these investments were quickly reflected in the growth of economic activity, both in Constanța and throughout the country (Jugănar. coord. 2020, pp. 70-71, 75, 74). At the same time, the economic development recorded towards the end of the 19th century (also viewed in terms of increasing population's income) generated multiple social changes. The completion of the railway and Cernavodă bridge (which at the time of its inauguration was the longest bridge in Europe) (<https://www.historia.ro/sectiune/general/articol/cum-a-reusit-tanarul-inginer-anghel->

[saligny-sa-ridice-cel-mai-lung-pod-din-europa](#)) led to an increase in the volume of transported goods, the development of domestic and international trade, but at the same time they facilitated the transport of tourists to Constanța.

For certain social classes, the desire to travel, the attraction for holidays at sea was becoming more and more obvious (Păuleanu, 2006, pp. 147, 181), which generated the increase in tourist demand. At the same time, the economic development of the city also contributed to the increase in accommodation capacity (an element of the tourist offer) in Constanța.

While at the time of its union with the Romanian Principalities, in 1878, Constanța was considered a "ruined Turkish village" (Huhulescu, 1934, p. 1; Păuleanu, 2006, p. 86), in 1898 the city was already drawing attention through its development. A journalist of the publication "Familia" shows his amazement both in terms of economic achievements in Constanța, recalling new buildings, wide streets, elegant hotels, the multitude of shops with oriental goods, the large size of the port, and the beauty of the landscape offered by the expansive sea (Familia, 1898, p. 507; Păuleanu, 2006, pp. 84, 93).

4.2. Constanța – a balneary resort

The healing qualities of the port-settlement called Tomis seem to have been appreciated since the Roman domination, but regarding the tourist activity, it is chronicled that during the Turkish administration (which ended in 1878), bathing in the sea was done in Constanța (it was called Kustendje at the time), on the south-east coast, under the open sky and in the barracks (Dacia, 1924, p. 1; Păuleanu, 2006, p. 180).

The interest of the Romanian administration in finding the best coastal areas, where beaches could be set up, manifested immediately, after 1878, sensing the development potential of the city also in terms of tourism. One place where sea bathing was done was Modern beach, founded in 1876. Shortly afterwards, a Serbian investor, Radacovici, built some cabins near Carol I Hotel, but access to the water was difficult due to the rocks on the seabed. This beach did not last long and a new beach started to be set up, to the north, in the bay next to the Armenian church. After another period, the south of the city was taken into consideration for a new beach (Păuleanu, 2006, pp. 181-182, 184).

In the mass media of the time information is recorded, from which one can construe that the most requested beach in the city was the one called "La vii", founded in 1885, according to the plans of engineer Gafencu which could be reached by train, which both locals and tourists called the train of pleasure (Tarascon, 1906, pp. 2-3; Păuleanu, 2006, p. 152). Then the same designation was used for the train that connected Constanța and Bucharest, and the passengers were called "pleasurables". In another note, signed by Barbu Ștefănescu Delavrancea, dated August 16, 1887, it is recalled that the road from the city to the beach was crossed by train, the route included four stops (Ovidiu, Gară - Railway station, Tomis and Tetis), then tourists climbed down the stairs from the high coast to the beach. It is also specified that "La vii" beach was organized separately for the ladies, on the left side, and for the gentlemen, on the right. (Barbu Delavrancea, 1970, pp. 113-121; Păuleanu, 2006, pp. 153, 156). On the beach "bathing establishments" were set up, represented by 56 wooden cabins, land crossing bridges and stairs for descending into the sea water. For tourists who knew other seaside resorts from abroad, the separation of the beach "La vii" was a contested issue (Păuleanu, 2006, p. 154). The constant increase in the number of tourists who came to this beach determined the authorities to decide, in the summer of 1899, to increase the number of journeys, per day, which the train made in order to ensure the transport of the tourists along the city-beach-city route. (Păuleanu, 2006, p.155).

From one year to the next, Constanța became more and more appreciated as a tourist destination, and in 1882 it was already listed as one of the main balneary resorts in Europe (Păuleanu, 2006, p. 184).

In 1892, another 52 cabins were built, in the area of the Genoese quay, and in 1895, the setting up of another 35 cabins (in each place) was decided for two other places. Even under these conditions, in the newspaper Constanța, of 21 April 1896, the opinion that, at that time, the city of Constanța had few set up beaches is recorded (Constanța, 1896, p. 2; Păuleanu, 2006, p. 191).

4.3. The abolition of the “La Vii” beach by expanding the port

In 1892, Constanța was already classified as a “balneary resort” and operated on the basis of a “Regulation”, drafted by the mayor's office and endorsed by the Ministry of Interior (DJAN, 1892; Păuleanu, 2006, p. 188).

The beginning of the works for the expansion of the port of Constanța, in 1889, represented on the one hand an opportunity for economic and social development, and on the other hand the treat to reduce the tourist activity. Only a few years later, the following aspects were mentioned about Constanța: “Able to reach through its port, the true gateway of European trade for the Orient, the city is perceived, in 1899, as a first-rate balneary resort; however, new industrial developments are beginning to hinder the traditional type of approach” (Tomis, 1899, p. 2; Păuleanu, 2006, p. 194). In fact, the lack of a suitable beach, but also the appearance of new resorts / tourist localities, such as Mangalia, Carmen Silva, Eforie (with wide beaches, easy access to water) led to the loss of the seaside resort position and privileged climate position (“Constanța Conservatory”, 1911, p. 3; Păuleanu, 2006, p. 185). In 1900, a businessman from Constanța proposed to the mayor and local councilors the setting up of adequate beaches, in order to support Constanța's character of balneary resort. This was followed, in 1903, by the modernization of the men's beach in the Pescarilor bay area (today's marina area) (Păuleanu, 2006, pp. 194-195).

All the pursuits of the local authorities aimed to support the image of Constanța as the largest port and the most important maritime balneary resort (Păuleanu, 2006, pp. 195-196). Proposals began to appear to move the beach to the north of the city, to Mamaia, even if it was considered that the area was at a greater distance from the city. In fact, in 1904 a shore consolidation project was approved, on which occasion the construction of dams to create a beach in Mamaia was also proposed (“Dacia”, 1928; Păuleanu, 2006, p. 185).

4.4. Looking for a new beach for Constanța

Given that the attraction of spending the holidays at the sea (which means tourist demand, expressed in the number of tourists) increased visibly from one year to another (Jugănar, 2007, pp. 352-353), city officials, businessmen, specialists of different professional categories thus became concerned with finding a new beach, near the city (“Aurora”, 1895, p. 3; “Steaua Constanței”, 1905, p. 2; Păuleanu, 2006, pp. 181, 186, 198), to compensate for the abolition, by executing the port's modernization works, of the beach called at that time “Băile la Vii”. Even the remarkable engineer Anghel Saligny, who coordinated the construction of the bridge over the Danube, and then the works to expand the port, got involved in the process of choosing a place for a new beach in Constanța (Păuleanu, 2006, p. 180). In his opinion, expressed on January 9, 1904, the condition for the city of Constanța to develop as a balneary resort was to have a beach properly equipped for tourism activity (<http://vladimirrosulescu-istorie.blogspot.com/2012/09/mamaia.html>). This beach would have to be close to the city, cover a large area, have accommodation spaces as close to the sea as possible, so that tourists, especially families with children, could spend the entire day at the beach, as was the offer of some famous foreign beaches, such as Ostende, Scheveningen and others (<https://turismistoric.ro/concediul-la-mamaia-asa-cum-nu-il-cunoasteti/>).

During the debates, the attention of several people turned to the northern part of the city. Almost 10 years before the decision to set up a new beach was taken, an attractive place was mentioned in the press “12 km north of the city a long beach, with huge sand deposits, without banks, on a stretch of 5 km ... rivals with the Mediterranean coasts” (“Constanța”, 1896, p. 2; Păuleanu, 2006, p. 191). But, at that time, no attention was paid to this aspect. The land area between Lake Siutghiol (to the West) and the Black Sea (to the East) was like a strip of deserted coastline, with sand dunes whose height reached 5-7 m, and at the end of this strip there was a modest settlement of fishermen, with rare houses and a famous water mill, at the border of Lake Siutghiol (<https://turismistoric.ro/concediul-la-mamaia-asa-cum-nu-il-cunoasteti/>). But the settlement, modest and deserted, quite difficult to reach, was already a favorite place of the Romanian aristocracy, which went there to spend the summer holidays and for aerosol therapy, ever since the end of the 19th century.

The decision to move the main beach of Constanța to Mamaia generated many debates, disagreements and tensions between various interest groups.

4.5. The setting up and the inauguration of Mamaia beach

At the initiative of Professor Ion Bănescu, mayor of Constanța (between 1905-1907), Mamaia beach began to be set up in 1905. By moving the beach, considered at the time mayor Bănescu: "Today's city, quite narrow and crowded, will remain the port city, of noise and movement, and Mamaia will become, in the future, a meeting, rest and health place" (Păuleanu, 2006, p. 196). It should be noted that mayor Ion Bănescu was the one who recognized the beauty of this place, but also the opportunity that by tourism capitalization the city of Constanța, but also the entire country would win (Iancu, 2015).

The project for setting the beach in Mamaia was drawn up by architect Petre Antonescu, and French landscape architect Eduard Emile Redont drafted the plan for the systematization, subdivision, beautification of the beach and its surroundings (Păuleanu, 2006, p. 196).

The first constructions were done in 1906 by the Ministry of Public Works (where Anghel Saligny was a director) and a private investor and represented two pavilions of 56 cabins each, completed with an elegant gazebo, as well as 80 mobile booths (45 for men and 35 for women). Furthermore, safety ropes had been fitted in the delineated area to enter into the sea, so as to avoid accidents. (<https://www.europafm.ro/azi-se-implinesc-111-ani-de-la-inaugurarea-statiunii-mamaia/>)

The reception and conclusion of the delivery receipt minutes of the construction, between Constanța City Hall and the entrepreneur Ecaterina D. Nicolaescu, took place on July 1, 1906 (Iancu, 2015) or on the 15th, according to other sources, when the entrepreneur took charge of the beach, and on June 20, 1906 began its use (Luca, 2020).

The inauguration of the resort took place in August 1906, according to some sources on August 28, 1906 (https://www.litoralulromanesc.ro/descriere_mamaia.htm; <https://www.europafm.ro/azi-se-implinesc-111-ani-de-la-inaugurarea-statiunii-mamaia/>), and other sources mention the date of August 22, 1906. (<https://litoralcazare.com/scurt-istoric-al-statiunii-mamaia/-Plăiașu> - <https://www.historia.ro/sectiune/general/articol/concediu-la-1912-baile-de-mare-la-mamaia>).

The inauguration event consisted in the organization of two trains, one for officials, another for tourists, which travelled on the road from Constanța, to Băile/Baths (beach) Mamaia, in an hour and a half, and from 19 o'clock a party took place. The newspaper "La Roumanie" stated: "Constanța today has a beach that will place it among the great balneary resorts in the Orient" (Luca, 2020. <https://discoverdobrogea.ro/mamaia-statiunea-vizitata-de-milioane-de-turisti-in-ultimul-secol/>).

After the inauguration, the construction of the beach in Mamaia was leased (as was the case with the beaches in the city), and the first contractor was Ecaterina D. Nicolaescu (<https://www.cain.ro/mamaia-litoral/>).

In a short time, the beach became an oasis of peace and relaxation for the elites of the time, then even for the royal family.

The transport of tourists from Constanța (from the train station) to Mamaia beach was done by rail, but the carriages were also used. Engineer Anghel Saligny coordinated the installation works of the Constanța - Mamaia railway line in 1905. In fact, in 1905, the Constanța-Băile (beach) railway from Vii (with a length of 3.1 km) was abolished first, and with some of the recovered materials, the Railway Directorate-Constanța Railway Service built the Constanța-Băile (beach) Mamaia railway (8 km long).

It is known about the railway station in Constanța that it was built between 1860-1862 (Păuleanu, 2006, p. 108), under Ottoman administration, by the same English company that built the Constanța-Cernavodă railway.

The train station in Mamaia (located next to the Casino today) was inaugurated on October 2, 1905 and existed until the early 60's. In the beginning, the railway was used only in the summer season, to transport tourists, but in certain periods it was used for strategic purposes (military, during wars or for transporting construction materials) (<https://turismistoric.ro/concediul-la-mamaia-asa-cum-nu-il-cunoasteti/>).

The railway between Constanța and Mamaia is presented as a significant achievement in the anniversary volume "1878-1928 DOBRUDJA. Fifty years of life" (Brătescu; Georgescu. 1928). In addition to technical aspects related to the railway, aspects related to the development and the importance of this beach are also presented. In this context, we remember Queen Maria's love for the sea and Mamaia beach, but also the impact that the construction of the Royal Castle had on the

development of the resort. It is specified that at that time, the beautiful Mamaia beach stretched for a length of 14 km, up to Capul Midia. It was also estimated that this railway would be used throughout the year, given that “the city has developed a lot in that part” (Brătescu and Georgescu, 1928, pp. 439-440).

4.6. The 115th anniversary of the establishment of Mamaia beach

In 2021 there will be 115 years since a new Constanța beach was inaugurated, which in time became Mamaia tourist resort, appreciated / considered as the reference resort of the Romanian coast. Few people know the history of this resort, whether we are referring to tourists, but also to today's inhabitants of Constanța city. Through the documentation carried out in this study we have found that there are people interested in bringing to attention various materials that contain valuable information about significant moments in the evolution of the resort. We are positive that the reunion and involvement of these people (who respect the history of these places and want to transmit to generations of young people emotion and attraction for Mamaia and Constanța) would contribute to formulating unique proposals for organizing the anniversary event of Mamaia resort in the summer of 2021.

We believe that throughout the summer season, the „Mamaia of 115 years of existence” event should be made known by „preparing printed materials to be placed in all accommodation, dining and leisure units; placing, in as many places in the city and resort as possible, of billboards containing a slogan and logo specially designed for this event; the installation of plaques / panels in representative places to remind of the existence of some attractions which have disappeared, but which had a special significance to the image of the resort; organization of exhibitions with paintings, sketches, documents regarding Mamaia beach; presentations of swimsuit models, but also of clothing, especially from the beginning of the tourist activity; the revival of some forms of leisure (Jugănar, 2006, p. 37) practiced / encountered during that period; organizing concerts with music specific to the early twentieth century.

On August 22 or 28, we propose to organize the restoration of the route, crossed in 1906, using a combination of means of transport, reminiscent of the charm of past periods.

The initial route started from the old Constanța train station, crossed the central area of the city, on Calea Mangaliei (today Ștefan cel Mare street), and from the intersection of the current Tomis and Mamaia boulevards it oriented to the North, through the Tăbăcărie neighborhood and on the seafront, stopping at Băile Mamaia (<https://turismistoric.ro/concediul-la-mamaia-asa-cum-nu-il-cunoasteti/>).

5. Conclusions

In various documents it is noted that events were organized in Constanța, related to the establishment of economic objectives or the celebration of important moments in the history of this place.

The summer season of 2021 represents an opportunity for the local administration, culture, art, history specialists, business representatives, institutions, organizations, associations, etc. to celebrate the 115th anniversary of the establishment of Mamaia beach, in fact marking the 115th anniversary of Mamaia resort. We believe that the event would have a positive impact from a social and emotional point of view on tourists and locals, but also from an economic and image point of view for the business environment. All actions within the event should also be accessible online for greater visibility.

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