



## A PROPOSED PROJECTION OF THE MARKETING TOOLS FOR THE TRNC MARINAS IN THE INTERNATIONAL MARKETS

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### Öz

Marina, sektörde nispeten yeni bir turizm ürünü olmasına rağmen, dünya ekonomilerinde bilinen en yüksek gelişme oranlarından birinin son otuz yılda bu üründe kaydedildiği genel olarak kabul edilmektedir.

Bu büyüme trendi içerisinde Kuzey Kıbrıs, elverişli coğrafyası ve Doğu Akdeniz havzasındaki iklimi ile rekabet edebilme potansiyeline sahiptir. Yazar, mega yatların söz konusu olduğu yerlerde özellikle mevcut olan doluluk oranı eksikliğini dikkate alarak, KKTC'de deniz turizmi geliştirme fırsatlarını inceliyor. Bugünün uluslararası piyasadaki varlığını ve rekabet avantajını sürdürme koşullarında, KKTC marinalarının başarılı pazarlama stratejileri uygulaması gerekir.

Yat turizmi çok karlı bir sektör olmasına ve bir ülkeyi tanımak için çok önemli bir araç olmasına rağmen, KKTC'de yat turizmi ile ilgili bilimsel bir bakış açısıyla çalışma olmadığı görülmüştür. Bu büyük boşluk nedeniyle bu çalışma, altyapı ve pazarlama alanında gerçekleştirilecek şekilde tasarlanmıştır.

Bu çalışma ile, KKTC marinalarının uluslararası pazarda pazarlama araçlarını başarılı bir şekilde kullanabilmesi için potansiyelini, avantajlarını ve dezavantajlarını ortaya koyarak KKTC'de marina operasyonlarının gelişimini belirginleştirmek amaçlanmıştır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, KKTC marinalarının uluslararası pazarlarda kullanabileceği faydalı pazarlama araçları önermektir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Deniz Turizmi, Yat Turizmi, Marina, Uluslararası Marina Marketi, Pazarlama Karması.

### Abstract

Although Marina is a relatively new tourism product in sector, it is generally accepted that one of the highest development rates known in the world economies has been recorded for this product in the last three decades.

Within this growing trend Northern Cyprus with its favorable geography and climate in the Eastern Mediterranean basin has a high potential to compete. The author examines opportunities for developing nautical tourism in TRNC by building new marinas, considering the present lack of occupancy rate which is especially evident where mega-yachts are concerned. In today's conditions to maintain their presence and competitive advantage in international market, TRNC marinas should apply successful marketing strategies.

Although yachting tourism is a very profitable sector and very important tool for recognizing a country it was seen that there is no study from a scientific perspective related with the yachting tourism in TRNC. Because of this big gap this study is designed to perform at the infrastructure and marketing grounds.

With this study it is aimed to demystify the development of marina operations in TRNC, to identify the potentials, advantages and disadvantages of TRNC marinas in international markets for the successful usage of marketing tools. The aim of this study is to propose useful marketing tools which can be used by TRNC marinas in international markets.

**Keywords:** Nautical Tourism, Yacht Tourism, Marina, International Marina Market, Marketing Tools.

## 1. Introduction

Sea and seamanship, which has played a major role in the development of international trade around the world, has been also a very popular hobby in America and Europe for many years. Sea and seamanship have showed a rapid development in recent years as a hobby in the World, in Turkey and in Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) as well.

Tourism as an industry, and *nautical tourism* as an integral part of it, is an important sector whose indirect effects are more important than the direct, thus supporting the development of many other industries. Within the last 30 years, the three core industries of nautical tourism (the marina, charter and cruise industries) have been continuously showing high growth rates. In time of economic crisis in this decade, with its lack of inventiveness and investment, nautical tourism and its sectors become a new opportunity for development. Its growth can be clearly seen at local and regional levels, and its constituent parts are becoming potential local economic leaders (Luković, 2012, 399).

Although *marina* is a relatively new tourism product in sector (its intensive development began in the late 1970s of the twentieth century), it is generally accepted that demand for yachting tourism is growing at a much faster pace than demand for conventional "sun and sea" tourism (Mikulić, Krešić & Kozić, 2015,

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5). Yachting has also been very popular sport branch either. Because of this popularity, marina industry became a natural extension of it.

With its favorable geography and climate, Northern Cyprus is situated in the eastern Mediterranean basin has a high potential to compete in this growing trend. In today's conditions to maintain their presence and competitive advantage in international Marina market TRNC marinas should apply successful marketing strategies. High quality of service in marinas is another important factor that makes competitive for Northern Cyprus marinas. Therefore, the aim of the present study, to provide marketing strategies and to suggest proposals for operating in Northern Cyprus Marina.

The objectives of this study are to demystify the development of marina operations in TRNC, to identify the potentials, advantages and disadvantages of TRNC marinas in international markets, and aim is to propose useful marketing tools which can be used by these marinas. Therefore, there should have been more studies and researches on marina and yachting tourism in the TRNC.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Nautical Tourism

In the recent years significant number of tourists has interested in sea and sea sports. It is very popular in coastal countries and because of this popularity *nautical tourism* is an important part of tourism industry (Arat, 2006, 3-5).

It is possible to define nautical tourism as a travel, relations among the peoples and nature that to participate marine-oriented recreational activities (in, under, over, on the coast) or/and to spend their holidays in marine areas. According to reports of the UNWTO, one of every two persons participating tourism activities trip to sea or one of the seafront areas. In this case, nautical tourism consists of quite a variety of facilities and activities as a component of Tourism industry. Such as;

- shore-based components
- sea-based components

Generally, the shore-based components are the facilities and activities on coasts and beaches; sea-based components are the facilities and activities in the sea, on the surface or bottom of the seas.

According to the Luković's classification of nautical tourism, there are three basic types in this industry: (1) marina, (2) charter, (3) cruising. Marinas are the commercially most important ports of nautical tourism for yachts/boats. The charter industry, in the nautical tourism not the maritime fleet, is generally associated with marinas. Charter, in terms of renting and providing services related to work on the vessels, expands the range of its activity, in addition to which hiring a professional skipper is quite common" (Luković, 2012, 401).

The effects of nautical tourism have important dimensions because of the participating ratio of tourists to tourism activities in sea or seashore areas. As with other types of tourism, the effects of nautical tourism can be examined in economic, social and physical environment effects. First positive economic impact of nautical tourism is creation of income and employment for local people. Positive social effects; the development of mutual understanding, increasing cultural interaction are other positive effects. Furthermore, the main positive effects on physical environment of nautical tourism; legal arrangements for environmental issues issued by governments, environmental training applications, increasing the protection precautions.

### 2.2 Yachting Tourism

Within above mentioned classification yachts/boats are the common point for the marina industry and the charter industry. The marina and charter industries can be assessed in the yachting tourism because of their common point.

Yachting is the newest trend and important resources for the general economy. It is obviously a part of maritime sector, that provides to key role in the tourist activities under the name of yachting tourism. Recognition of this potential, the government and private sector are trying to gain more interest from yacht tourism. Both private and state new marinas have been constructed or are under construction with this vision. Within this window, as understood from the new marina projects, TRNC aims to develop tourism along own coasts and tourism will continue to grow in the further years with new constructed marinas and facilities. Especially Northern and Eastern coast of the island is also favorable for expansion. Increasing the capacity of berths is another issue for the companies in the tourism sector. As a result, the share of TRNC's yachting tourism is set to expand rapidly in the near future (Sariisik, Turkay & Akova, 2011, 1016).



### 2.3 Marina

The most important organizations for developing and advertising the yachting tourism in a country are the marinas. In this context, C. Bizzarri, & D. La Foresta's (2011) case study shows us that "marinas certainly represent a strong opportunity for economic growth for the territory and the local community being able to influence significantly the gross internal product. The integration of tourist harbors with the hinterland and urban areas offering high standard services, including those focusing on environmental control, are fundamental and distinguishing elements for the recognition of the primary role of the -ports-, which came into being to do act as exactly that: -the door to the inland territory beyond-, offering the opportunity to all the various localities to promote their historic richness, their cultural and gastronomic specialties" (Bizzarri & Foresta, 2011, 59). Marinas constitute the basic infrastructure of yachting industry as well as they are attractive force of regional and local development plans for different sectors/ industries.

Nowadays marinas are the places where yachts can berth safely. They can take fuel, food and water as well. More importantly marinas can be defined as the focus of the regional socio-economic development. "Marina" term was used for the first time in 1928 by the National Association of Engine & Boat Manufacturers. According to their definition marinas are modern waterfront facilities which built for entertainment and recreational boats accommodation. Besides their more comprehensive definition includes improved quays, jetties and berths, as well as easy access to all port facilities, the implementation and improvement of services (bath, WC, laundry, infirmary etc.) and lastly a guarantee of the defense of the environment and an assurance of the least possible impact on its coastline.

Another definition comes from "The Yacht Harbor Association-TYHA". According to the Association, marinas are the facilities which provide quays, jetties and berths, easy access to all port facilities and each yacht, enough water depth (including the tides), and additionally car parks, baths, WCs, laundries, infirmaries etc.

There are two very important factors related with the sea area of the marina. These are;

- Water depth,
- Effect of tide (High water, Low water).

Minimum water depth within the Marina sea area, depth should be at least more than 2, 44m. tide's lowest water level. Yacht's type and number are limited for shallower than mentioned depth.

Marinas are considering as service supplier and they are situated under "hospitality industry" in economic sector. As stated by Socio-economic point of view Marinas provide too much benefits particularly for service buyers in addition adjacent business and local citizens living in the same place.

### 2.4 International Marina Market

Mediterranean coasts with its nature and climate, have gained popularity among the international tourism destinations since the beginning of this quarter. France, Italy and Spain are still popular countries in tourism markets, because of their rational investments and well-developed policies in the field of yacht tourism. On the other hand, quieter and cheaper coasts in the Europe and the Mediterranean area attracts Yachtsmen's attention more and more. Turkey, Greece, TRNC and Tunisia are the countries respond to this need in the South and Eastern Mediterranean. Another reason is that makes Eastern Mediterranean's marina service attractive, there is an increase natural pollution and prices in the Western Mediterranean.

According to the data by the World Tourism Organization (WTO) in 2015, Europe ranks the first place as the top tourism region with 609 million tourists visiting. Asia-Pacific region followed with 278 million tourists and the United States ranked as third region with 191 million tourists. Again, according to the records which is taken by WTO "The most-preferred tourism regions are the Caribbean Islands and the Mediterranean coasts for the yacht tourism" (Sevinç & Güzel, 2016, 62). This analysis clearly shows us that the destinations for yacht tourism have historically changed and shift from the Western Mediterranean to the Eastern Mediterranean.

There are approximately over a thousand of marinas with a capacity of 500 thousand units in the Mediterranean basin. According to various resources approximately a million yacht is sailing in the basin of the Mediterranean Sea. It shows that demand is larger than supply in marina and yachting market.

Because of its mentioned advantages and development potential TRNC is able to get share more than present share in international demand surplus marina market. In order to meet high demand TRNC has entered into an ongoing commitment to build new marinas and yachting harbors in northern and eastern coast of Cyprus Island.



At the same time, in recent years rapidly growing numbers of super and mega yachts have increasingly created a large demand especially in the Mediterranean range. Thus, renewal process of the existing marina and new marina construction around the Eastern Mediterranean mainly in the Turkey has begun according to the request which comes from mega yachts and superyachts owners. These marinas have designed to provide top-ranking quality of the service.

## 2.5 Marketing Tools

Managing the marketing mix is the central task of marketing professionals. The marketing mix is the set of marketing tools - often summarized as the 'four Ps': the product, its price, promotion and place - that the firm uses to achieve its objectives in its target market (McCarthy, 2001 as cited in Doyle, Baker (Ed.) 2003, 287). The central assumption is that if marketing professionals make and implement the right decisions about the features of the product, its price, and how it will be promoted and distributed, then the business will be successful (Doyle, et.al, 287).

For the service business in the process of an effective marketing should be an appropriate marketing mix. But before that, basic marketing process should be summarized. Same marketing approach can be applied for goods and services. Identifying and selecting of target market, creating service implementations for the customer's expectations, creation and execution of an appropriate marketing strategy, and finally logistics adjustments are necessary for both goods and services marketing.

Marketing mix is a planning phase and implementation of activities in the target market which gives the opportunity to get benefits from hoping to reach manufactured goods or services of the business.

### 2.5.1 Product "Service"

On the contrary to common belief a product is not always touchable so, anything that can be serviced to a market to satisfy a want or need such as services, experiences, events, persons, places, properties, organizations, information, and ideas.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that "the service-producing sector with about 14.6 million jobs through 2018, or 96 percent of the expected increase in total employment will be dominant. By 2018, the goods-producing sector is expected to account for 12.9 percent of total jobs, down from 17.3 percent in 1998 and 14.2 percent in 2008. These numbers and others have led to a growing interest in the special problems of marketing services" (Kotler & Keller, 2012, 355).

A *service* is "any performance one party can offer to another that is essentially insubstantial and does not result in the ownership of anything. Increasingly, manufacturers, distributors, and retailers are providing value-added services, or simply excellent customer service, to differentiate themselves" (Kotler & Keller, 2012, 356).

Academics define product by means of "benefits of goods". The "benefit" mentioned here is provided attributes to the item to fit the specific needs of the people. However, marketer find this definition insufficient. Marketers classify products on the basis of durability, tangibility, and use (consumer or industrial). Each type has an appropriate marketing-mix strategy (Kotler & Keller, 2012, 327).

### 2.5.2 Price

Pricing is a component of the marketing mix which directly affect the profitability of the businesses and easiest to control. But the psychological impact of pricing for services is more intense. Especially if there are no criteria that will determine the quality of service, it will be the price as said by the consumer's criteria.

Price is the revenue producing element of the marketing-mix, but the other elements of marketing-mix produce costs. At the same time price is perhaps the easiest tool of the marketing program to adjust. Comparing with the product features, channels, and even communications it takes less time. So, well-designed and smart pricing strategies are the important ways to reach the profitability goal as a result (Kotler & Keller, 2012, 383).

Companies usually offered not a specific price, because variations in geographical demand and costs, market-segment requirements, purchase timing, order levels, and other factors effect pricing structure. Price-adaption is necessary.

Several price-adaptation strategies are available: (1) geographical pricing, (2) price discounts and allowances, (3) promotional pricing, (4) discriminatory pricing (Kotler & Keller, 2012, 410).

### 2.5.3 Promotion

Marketing mix promotion component is closely related to the product's features. Due to the absence of any physical product, marketers and managers perform the activities of promotion based on an imaginary introduction. To communicate with the actual and potential customers of the business, *Promotion includes a*





variety of methods such as; advertising, publishing, public relations, personal selling and sales promotions. Promotion has a key role in activities like brand building and increasing the value of brand. Internal communication and promotion are also important factors in service enterprises to adapt to the market. It means that promotion activities (Internal marketing communication) includes not only customer-oriented but also employees should be covered.

*Advertising* is any paid form of nonpersonal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods, or services by an identified sponsor. Advertisers include not only business firms but also charitable, non-profit, and government agencies. Developing an advertising program is a five-step process:

- Set advertising objectives,
- establish a budget,
- choose the advertising message and creative strategy,
- decide on the media,
- evaluate communication and sales effects (Kotler & Keller, 2012, 530).

Advertising; from mouth to mouth advertising between the customers play the most effective role in marina advertising. As a member of a yacht club, telling of the assessments and experiments about the port/harbor and the marina is a very important advertising activity in the yacht tourism sector. Participating to the *fairs, races, boat shows, meetings, and related societies* as a sponsor or contributors are the most effective advertisement tools to reach the target market directly. Advertisements in the famous tourism journals are the most used methods for the marinas as well.

*Public relations* (PR) aims to promote or protect a company's image or its individual products in the competitive market. Publications, events, news, community affairs, identification media, lobbying, and social responsibility projects are the most common tools of PR.

Sales promotion consists of mostly short-term incentive tools, designed to stimulate quicker or greater purchase of particular products or services by consumers or the trade. In using sales promotion, a company must establish its objectives, select the tools, develop the program, pre-test the program, implement and control it, and evaluate the results. Events and experiences are a means to become part of special and more personally relevant moments in consumers' lives. Events can broaden and deepen the sponsor's relationship with its target market, but only if managed properly (Kotler & Keller, 2012, 530).

*Customer Satisfaction*; yachting tourism is a professional manner of service in business management and customer satisfaction is critical for service as well. Customer satisfaction surveys are very important tools for updating of the service offered. To apply these surveys to the customers after entering and before departing the marina should be accepted as routine procedure.

#### **2.5.4 Place**

The Place is a component of the marketing mix where the area is goods and services sold appropriately to customers, and/or distributed. It shows the distribution channels and delivering ways to end users. Service businesses should plan strategically how, where, and when they offer service. Due to the nature of the service electronic service delivery can also be performed from the distribution channels.

Products or services whichever produced by the company have to reach their customers for their consuming. If it is possible face-to-face exchange goods and services like previous trade times customer can take the produce to the local market. Unfortunately, nowadays trade becomes more sophisticated, clearly; "the services of various intermediaries along the supply chain may need to be used to ensure that the goods or services reach the consumer in the right manner at the right place, time and price". Manufacturers and producers of goods and services use a variety of methods to move their products from the point of production to the consumer. They may go direct to the consumer or they may use the services of intermediaries. However, in marina sector services must reach their customers, conversely, customers should come to the Marina. Marina services cannot be reached customers (Arat, 2006, 82).

### **3. Methodology of the research**

#### **3.1 Research Design & Instrument**

In this study, in order to achieve the research objectives and to maximize the validity of results, "qualitative research method" research strategy is chosen. By choosing this strategy, comprehensive information which was taken from the marina managers by using interview method assessed for the purpose. While performing of this study it is aimed to reach proper conclusions by making face to face interviews with the marina managers. In respect of this aim, limited number of marina (2) or yacht port (1) in TRNC is the only restriction in this study. However, this restriction overcame with the cooperative



approaches of managers and interviews were carried out. According to the outcomes general assessment has been made and propositions was put out about marketing strategies for the TRNC marinas.

A personal interview survey, also called as a face-to-face survey, is a survey method that is utilized when a specific target population is involved. So, it was asked for an appointment from the marina managers. Interviews were completed by the interviewer based on the respondent says, and at the same time the behavior of the respondents and experiences were tried to be evaluated.

The nature of qualitative research makes it possible to evaluate the data obtained. Finally, it is reached to related assessments and conclusions by using the observations made, the data obtained from marina managers interviews, investigations of marina internet sites and taken photos. Unless not approved the photoshoot was held at the end of the talks and was examined for the detection of different features about the marina and around marina.

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### **3.2 Research Aim**

The aim of this research is to demystify and to propose the marketing tools which should be used by TRNC marinas for marketing.

### **3.3 Research Objectives**

The following objectives were identified as relevant to the study:

1. To demystify the marketing tools which should be used by TRNC marinas.
2. To propose proper marketing tools which can be used by these marinas in international markets.

This study is performed to demystify the TRNC's marina attractiveness among the international yacht tourism destinations. While performing of this study it is aimed to reach proper conclusions by making face to face interviews with the marina managers. In respect of this aim, limited number of marina (2) or yacht port (1) in TRNC is the only restriction in this study. However, this restriction overcame with the cooperative approaches of managers and interviews are carried out. According to the outcomes general assessment has been made and propositions was put out about marketing strategies for the TRNC marinas. Qualitative research method is chosen to carry out this research. By choosing this method, comprehensive information which is taken from the marina managers can be assessed for the purpose.

### **3.4 Sample Design**

In this study, main population is currently operating and certified marinas in the TRNC. There are two marinas and one yacht port in Northern Cyprus. Sampling method does not use for the research, interviews was made with the general and middle level managers of these 3 marinas in the face to face meetings.

### **3.5 Survey Method**

Basically, there are two-types of personal interview survey according to how the interviewer approaches the respondents: intercept and door-to-door interviews. In an intercept approach, the interviewer usually conducts a short but concise survey by means of getting the sample from public places such as malls, theatres, food courts, or tourist spots. On the other hand, a door-to-door interview survey involves going directly to the house of the respondent and conduct the interview either on-the-spot or at a scheduled date.

In this study because of the location of the marinas and number of managers (interviewee) door-to-door interview survey method is preferred. Additionally, the purpose of conducting interview survey with the managers is to explore the responses of the managers to gather more and deeper information and to get benefits of their experiences. Interviews took 1.5 hours of each averagely; face-to-face talks have been about 9 hours total time allocated. The managers did not approve sound recording, in respect of this demand, interviews have been noted in writing, each interviewee's responses and answers were analyzed from the notes after the meeting, it was taken photo at the end of the talks and was examined for the detection of different features about the marina and around marina.

### **3.6 Data Collection**

Data will collect by interviewer after face to face meeting by sound recording and hand writing notes.



### 3.7 Limitations and Potential Problems

There are two marinas and one yacht port in Northern Cyprus. Limited number of marina (2) or yacht port (1) in TRNC is the only restriction in this study.

Face to face meetings carried out with the marina managers so evaluations of survey results will be based on marina managers point of view.

## 4. Research Findings and Analyses

### 4.1 Attractiveness of TRNC Marinas in International Markets

High prices in the Western Mediterranean, increasing demand in supply-demand balance, and the search for new natural beauties make attractive the Eastern Mediterranean's costs. TRNC is very attractive destination in Eastern Mediterranean because of its location, geography, climate and ecology.

According to the interviews main factors which affect the attractiveness of TRNC marinas are summarized in the following items:

- safety and security.
- natural beauties.
- not profit-Service Management perspective.
- custom and passport procedures.
- good behaviors to the customers.
- friendly and helpful service approach.
- new architecture and service concepts.
- communication infrastructure and abilities.
- art galleries and the art activities in the Marina.
- creation of a holiday atmosphere.
- cleanliness of sea water and swimming in or near the marina area.
- maintenance and repair facilities at the docking area and alternatives.
- library in the facilities.
- social and sport facilities in the Marina to satisfy the customers.
- boutique service concept and special VIP facilities.
- compatible equipment and the construction with nature.
- laundry and ironing services.
- mobile hairdressing service.
- transportation services provided by the marine administration.
- toilet and shower service.
- available lift facilities including mega yachts maintenance - repair services.
- 24 hours of broadcasting radio special service.

In addition to above positive factors implementation of marketing tools/strategies TRNC marinas are going to reach its best potential. Although insufficient marketing efforts, there are signs which shows the potential of TRNC.

### 4.2 Marketing Tools/Strategies in International Markets for TRNC Marinas

As a result of interviews and observations identified positive and negative marketing efforts are summarized in the following items;

- Marketing efforts for the existing marinas are individual and insufficient,
- Government support for marketing purposes is very limited,
- Implementation of marketing tools/strategies is uncertain,
- Promotion and sales activities for existing facilities are very limited scale in international marina market,
- On the other hand, marketing efforts were observed however this effort are based on marketing tools/strategies knowledge poorly.

In terms of marketing mix, marketing strategies applied by the TRNC marinas and the marketing efforts supported by the government can be effective more than did. On the other hand, there are some marketing efforts and they are effective because of the service and destination advantageous.



#### 4.2.1 Target Market

TRNC marinas offer service to people (foreign nationals) who is gained currently 2,000 euros monthly average international markets. Although top quality marina service offered to the customers in one of the TRNC marinas, the creation of the attraction for foreign customers have not yet fully come true for the top income group. Local customers represent the upper part of the demographics in TRNC while the foreign customers represent lower and middle level within the demographic structure of their countries.

#### 4.2.2 Quality of Service

International standards for the quality of service in the marinas or yacht ports are not yet codified. Therefore, some standards or rules which adopted by the yacht manufacturers and related organizations have a place in yacht tourism sector. In this meaning for the standardization, Permanent International Association of Navigation Congress (PIANC) which is held every year is very important. Various opinions and discussed issues about yacht tourism and particularly marina management become criteria. These criteria are accepted and implemented as the sectorial standards. But the current case, not precise criteria and non-fixed value are existing and commonly accepted by the governments.

There are no clear standards as identified above moreover significant marketing strategies are not developed neither. In order to evaluate the situation in TRNC marinas, one of the marinas in TRNC "Karpaz Gate Marina" took "5 Gold Anchors" and the "ICOMIA Clean Marina standard" from The Yacht Harbour in July 2013. e.g. In the case of Turkey new approaches for "quality of service" have been developing and implementing in recent years.

#### 4.2.3 Pricing

Yacht tourism as a part of nautical tourism sector is perceived exclusively, privileged and luxury choice by the customers in tourism sector. Due to this perception, pricing is accepted as an important parameter for the marketing. On one hand VIP service strategy is implementing by using prestige pricing, on the other hand low prices for services such as repair, maintenance and wintering strategy is implementing at the same time. Berthing in the prestigious marina or yacht port is accepting a social status sign that's why prestige pricing is accepted by some customers. In addition, low price policies applied to services such as repair, maintenance and wintering is a buried attraction factor for the marinas.

Approximately 30% - 40% discounts are made in the fairs held in the London, Dusseldorf, Genoa and Paris to participated yacht owners. But sales rate is much lower than expected. So, it shows us that the price is not affected as expected as.

#### 4.2.4 Promotion

TRNC/marinas/tourism companies participate international yachting fairs/boat shows from time to time. But in these events TRNC marina/yacht harbors managers prefer to present their marinas by themselves individually. This reduces the effectiveness of the corporate base of marketing efforts. Instead of such individual efforts, if the TRNC Ministry of Tourism, TRNC marinas/yacht harbors and other tourism companies participate this kind of events together they can be more effective. Even though TRNC marinas/yacht harbors can be in the same advertisement campaign with the neighbor Turkish marinas such as Antalya and Mersin in order to take advantage of synergy. Because destination is not only a single point but also a tour which includes two or more points in yachting tourism.

In recent years *organization of international races* is the most popular way to introduce the organizer marina, coasts and touristic places of the destination countries. Whereby this kind of races or "fleet tours" TRNC marinas can establish mutual trust and cooperation with the Spanish, Italian, Croatian, French and Turkish marinas.

Increasing of public awareness about yachting tourism is another marketing method used. In this context, invitation of press members for various activities carried out in the marina, presentations about yachting tourism and TRNC marinas, press publications and news about yachting tourism/marina in the local/international media, preparing "TRNC Marinas Catalogue" in many languages (English, German, French) are the factors for increasing of public awareness.

Social and cultural activities in Marinas should be considered as the best public relations activities for the yachtsmen/yachtswomen. In this sense, "last night entertainments" before departure for the longer stay foreign boats/yachts, next day "goodbye ceremonies", celebrations for special days of customers, art activities related with the sea and seamanship are some of the activities currently applied.





## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

In order to take more market share and to be more popular in international markets TRNC marinas should overcome some of the bottlenecks and approach positively some marketing strategies. In this context recommendations for the TRNC marinas are grouped in three main topics. First one is at the governmental level strategies, second one is at individual level marketing tools/strategies and last one is about recommendations for building and/or reconstruction of new marinas. They are summarized below.

### 5.1 Governmental Level Strategies

TRNC has not yet idea of destination management, overall tourism and nautical tourism inventory. Tourism and nautical tourism need to be supported by the government's tourism policies. Tour operator/agency system should be established for the yachting. By this means it will be much easier to sell.

Culture of the Turkish Cypriots as an island people with the interest to the sea must be increased. Professional and amateur sea activities must be supported, and the number of national and international sportier/yachter must be increased. Turkish yachter should be motivated to sail international seas. Established friendships with the foreign yachters in these voyages should be used to invite them to TRNC marinas. First of all, seamanship and yachting need to be developed thus TRNC yachting tourism will develop and be presented in International Markets. Number of Turkish flagged boats need to be increased in the TRNC marinas as much as number of foreign flagged boats.

It is important to pursue the path of corporate governance. Corporate governance is very important tool for management of the public administration or municipalities of marinas. To take in consideration that the increasing capacities and service development are advised to these marinas. It is necessary to compete in the international markets especially. In terms of tourism sector yacht tourism is the small part of the international market even though it is known for its very more returns on. This is why marinas should be seen as the source of income and investment must be carried out. In addition to increase the domestic market share promoting amateur yachting and reduced tax rates should be applied. Marina and custom entering procedures should be reduced and made easier for the foreign yachters.

Most of the foreign insurance companies chose not to cover more east of the 36° of longitude. This line of longitude refers to eastern side of Greece. So, international waters behind this line, TRNC and the Turkish territorial waters consider "not safe" by foreign insurance companies. For this reason, many yachters previously coming these waters refrain from to come to this region of Eastern Mediterranean in their voyage planning. However, these safety-risk sense originated from foreign insurance companies must be eliminated by the government policies. It should be implemented that operational risk in TRNC marinas same with the world standards. In this case a number of measures should be taken by the TRNC government within the cooperation with the neighbor countries' government especially Turkish government.

Legal framework for the yacht harbors/marinas needs to be prepared by the TRNC government correspondingly in the book of the European Union legislation on tourism. Mentioned legal framework should include integrated coastal management, controlling and certification of marina development projects issues. As the European countries also in TRNC should be assessed that all kind of water sports, sailing and yachting activities' rules should be established as a comprehensive system.

### 5.2 Individual Level Marketing Tools/ Strategies

Marina is a tourism enterprise. In addition to this, both products and services are marketed in marinas. Because of these characteristics, the application of the 4 P approach of classical marketing to marina businesses requires attention.

The most important factor to be considered in the implementation of the marketing mix for marina businesses is the target customer population (group/s). From this standpoint, the two determinants that should be taken into account when determining the target customer groups are the income level of the customers and whether the customers are domestic or foreign.

While the targeting phase is continuing, simultaneous activities should follow. It should be determined which products and services will be addressed to selected target customer groups and then a different marketing mix should be developed for each customer profile. The location of the marina will be determined according to the geography, climate and wind regime and also which type of boats will be addressed.

While marina is developing the marketing mix, the expectations of the target groups from the marina should be determined correctly. It should also determine whether changing internal and external



environmental conditions change the expectations of customer groups. It will be beneficial to use the surveys and questionnaires examining the marina' customers and to examine the yacht statistics.

### 5.2.1 Product/ Service

Actually, marinas are service enterprises. However, both the *service* and the *product* are marketed in marinas.

TRNC, which has two marinas in the real sense, provides almost high level of service according to international criteria with these two marinas. Additionally, TRNC has put some fisherman's shelters or hotel harbors into the name of marina to meet the demand, although there is usually a lack of technical infrastructure. It is observed that the marinas in Mediterranean countries can serve the yachts up to a few meters and there are not enough marinas in the Mediterranean Sea that can serve mega yachts. With geography, climate conditions, historical heritage and natural beauties, TRNC is attractive for yachtsmen. The return of a mega yacht to the marina for one day is very high compared to the return of an average yacht on the marina for one day. Considering all these attraction and profitability; The fact that there are marinas that can serve mega yachts will provide TRNC with a competitive advantage over competing countries.

The *services* provided in the marinas are the supply of provision, the availability of replacement equipment, the maintenance and repair services and the quality of these services is also very important. It has been observed that the marina's most important feature according to the yacht owners is electricity, water and protective berth service for 24 hours. However, these services cannot provide completely to the customers in marinas, fisherman and hotel harbours. The fact is that marinas should complete their shortcomings as soon as possible. Because it is important in terms of competition with rival country marinas.

Although insufficient number of marinas, in addition to the superstructure and infrastructure of the marinas, service should improve reach up to the best level. New construction projects of marina (Gazimağosa) should built as a "Prestige marina" and appeal to top income group's fancy; worldwide favorite yacht owners and yachts should invite to join the free service of these marinas.

### 5.2.2 Price

The high quality of the services provided in the marinas in TRNC where natural beauties are still not destroyed, and the cheap prices will give us a competitive advantage. However, the marina's location, the variety and quality of the services it provides and what type of yacht owners/customers profile it seeks to address are an important issue.

Price will not be an important element to yacht owner/customer who has a very high level of income. In order to attract this customer group, it should be aimed to highlight the privileged marina services. To address this group of customers, it is necessary to create a special marketing mix, including such as having privilege service with discriminatory pricing. Nevertheless, whether for ordinary services or privileged services, the most important factor in a pricing policy for a yacht owner/customer is the rate schedule has an understandable basis and tariff is easily applicable. Price adjustments due to occupancy rate or seasonal change can be perceived as unstable variable price policies and may negatively affect customer preferences. The free delivery of services such as free car parking (usually due to usage of rental car), free water supply (which should actually be included in the berthing fee) are also less considered and less priority services for the customers too.

### 5.2.3 Place

Although marinas are a service operator, the service does not go to the customer's feet. Customers go to marinas for service. Therefore, the location of the marina is of great importance. The most important factor in the location of a marina for yachters is the geography, climate and wind regime of the marina. Favorable winds courageous the amateur yachters.

Last-minute instant planning and last-minute decisions can be seen in World tourism. In this sense yacht tourism shows the difference from other tourism sectors, since it is necessary to decide a year planning before trip for the boat owners. Within this context marina reservations need to be made a long time before and routes required to be planned earlier. Points to consider in this holiday planning, there will be no one point or only one destination or specific marina selection. Because of the free mobility of boat/yacht they select country and/or region than they will select marina in that region. It is the fact that main attractions for the yacht tourism are natural beauty, available yacht tourism coastlines, touristic places. In other words, *region/country factor* which includes tourism and yacht tourism potential plus quality are the primary factors to select destination.

Northern Cyprus' geography, ecology, physical structures and additionally the service quality is important for the tourist attraction. For instance, Esentepe-Dipkarpaz coastline is very attractive but has not



yet reached as a touristic product at desired level. In general, the country and tourism zones in TRNC is not yet brand, it causes not to make use of an opportunity for the yachting tourism potential. When considered from this point of view priority need is to use marketing tools with the corporate and comprehensive marketing approach.

Marinas should redesign as a special facility for local people and tourists in the region, marina is not only for yachts and yachtsmen/yachtswomen but also living space for the people who lives in region. At this point both safety and privacy of the customers must take into consideration and at the same time should consider as a recreation area for the local people and tourists.

Marina's locations should be integrated with the city centers by designing integrated transport routes. Due to this integration visitors can lead to go touristic places, historic places, shopping centers, cities etc. With this kind of activities, spending time in marina and country can be extended. Especially with the horizontal integration of Marinas can be cause of the visiting another neighbor marina as well.

#### **5.2.4 Promotion**

It is observed that the regular updating of the marina's website and the participation to international fairs/boat shows are the most important promotional activities which directly affect marina selection.

The easy and up-to-date web site of the marina will help the yachters in any place in the world to learn about the marina and make the voyage plan quickly.

Instead of individual efforts; well-designed, organized and integrated efforts should be carried out and sales activities must be performed by TRNC marinas in the international fairs/boat shows. The participation of marinas in specialized international fairs/boat shows is a good opportunity to see the developments in the sector, to see the changes and to recognize the competitors and to introduce the products and services to the marina. The international fairs/boat shows bring together the institutions and organizations that serve directly or indirectly to yacht tourism and the officials and yachters who are interested in the subject amateur or professional.

Marinas in TRNC are currently printed by foreigners in some catalogues and pilot manuals. However, "TRNC Marinas Catalogue" should be issued and must be updated with detailed overview of the Northern Cyprus and Marina at periodic intervals.

Owing to the various activities held in Marinas, customer loyalty can be increased, and attractive services can be presented for the new customers. At the same time these activities and attractive services can be center of attraction not only for the yacht owners and/or yachtsmen/yachtswomen but also tourists and local citizens of the region. In this point of view marinas should be considered as a social living area.

#### **5.3 Recommendations for building and/or reconstruction of new marinas**

As discussed above occupancy, pollution and high prices in the Western Mediterranean marinas cause to search for alternative destinations in the Eastern Mediterranean. TRNC should evaluate this opportunity very well hence Northern Cyprus is the last appropriate geographical features for the yachting in the Eastern-Southern Mediterranean basin.

The Eastern Mediterranean basin with its geography and coastlines is very popular region in the recent years. However, TRNC has not yet taken benefit from this popularity of Northern Cyprus' coasts. To overcome this weakness and to convert to strength, in summary, international competitive and attractive marina building and/or reconstruction is required. The criteria are listed below for building and/or reconstruction marina:

- Geographic structure,
- Climate,
- Physical structure,
- Bureaucracy,
- Management and employees,
- Quality of secondary sector industries' services,
- Tourist product perception
- Local citizen's and various secondary sector industries' perspective.

And finally,

- Proper marketing tools/strategies implementations.

Proper means here for the TRNC marinas;



- top quality of *service*, “prestige marina” *product*,
- understandable and applicable *price policy*, privileged *service prices (discriminatory pricing)*,
- highlighting *place*,
- very effective and aggressive *promotion*; well organized *website*, participation of international *fairs/boat shows*.

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