



MODEL OF A CITY DESTINATION CARD AS A MARKETING TOOL OF SELECTED EUROPEAN CITIES

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Abstract: City tourism belongs to the strongest trends in the international tourism market, which is especially the case in Europe, where eight out of twenty largest city destinations are located. Faced with growing competition these urban destinations have, however, to look for new marketing solutions to strengthen their position and attractiveness for potential visitors. One of them is a destination card which integrates a variety of tourism services provided by several operators at a discounted inclusive price. Therefore, it offers visitors an advantage by bundling the products and services available without the need for booking and buying in advance. By doing so, the card also fosters higher participation in cultural activities and public transport usage and offers additional benefits for the city which can include spreading the tourist traffic throughout the city or attracting visitors to lesser known sites. Additionally, the destination card system can also provide data concerning tourist flows and allows to adapt the offer better to their specific needs. The purpose of this paper is therefore to work out the model of a city destination card for a large city. In order to achieve this objective, the top five European capital cities were selected based on the number of visitors. Subsequently, the comparative study – developed on the secondary analysis of data – of tourist cards offered in London, Paris, Rome, Prague and Vienna has been conducted. Based on the study and referring to the literature, the final results were formulated concerning the typical structure of a card and its additional elements, followed by the validity period solutions and their price. Satisfied customers highlight that the offered card combines everything needed for the tourist stay, as in their opinion, cards tend to be a very easy, convenient and simple way of sightseeing the city with benefits such as saving money and time. They also recommend longer periods of card validity. The value of the destination card as a marketing tool for a city has also been proven based on the appraisal of customers opinions.

Keywords: city tourism, European capital cities, destination card, tourism marketing.

1. Introduction

City tourism remains the most dynamic type of tourism worldwide. It soared by 60% between 2010 and 2015 to reach a 20% share of all international trips in 2015 according to IPK International [*High value...* 2015].

It is also a very strong phenomenon in Europe, which is the largest tourism destination region and at the same time boasts eight out of the twenty cities with the most international overnight visitors [*High value...* 2015]. These are in particular capital cities which through their political, administrative and cultural

functions exert a substantial influence on tourist flows and belong to the most significant urban destinations. Such cities seem to play a key role as pull-factors for visitors from outside the old continent. Within Europe itself the growth of city tourism is closely related to the rise of low cost carriers such as Ryanair, and cheap accommodation as well as new attractions and activities. As a result, in the first eight months of 2016 city trips of European outbound market grew by 15 percent showing the largest dynamics from among different tourism types [ITB 2017].

City tourism or urban tourism encompasses the activities of international and domestic visitors contextualized by both built and natural landscapes, amenities and infrastructure [Hall 2002]. The key motivations for city trips are mainly through sightseeing, enjoying the city atmosphere, shopping, eating out, and visiting cultural attractions [ITB 2016]. However, it is the most often the cultural heritage which is the central tourist resource of a city, including historic places and buildings, monuments and artefacts, but also social values, traditions, artistic expressions and practices [Paskaleva 2010]. City travel is closely related to the short-breaks market, because most stays only involve spending one to three nights, however cities are working hard to attract long-stay tourists as well [Dwyer et al. 2009].

But at the same time cities are facing a growing number of challenges in developing, managing and promoting their products in a competitive and rapidly-changing market. Much stronger competition is endangering the traditional first tier European cities like Paris, London and Rome, coming from other city destinations in America, Asia or elsewhere. As a result, city image and product competitiveness have become more important than ever [Cave, Jolliffe 2012]). What is, however, the most problematic, is the heterogeneous structure of the city tourism product, where different elements like public transport, hotels, bars and restaurants, tourist offices, local attractions and events influence the final experience of tourists. Each of these elements is usually managed and produced by individual players that are most often competing with each other [Buhalis 2000]. What is an additional challenge is that cities as destinations are characterized by high densities of physical structures, people and functions, cultural and social heterogeneity, multi-functional economies and physical centrality within regional and inter-urban networks [Pearce 2001]. On the other hand, tourists perceive the destination as a brand, or as an integrated product [Buhalis 2000]. The more services and products that tourists actually experience, the more likely they are to return to this destination [Pechlaner,

Abfalter 2005]. Consensus and cooperation among the involved stakeholders is therefore required in order to develop joint strategies. One possibility for destinations to market and manage their products as an integrated package is to set up a destination card (or city card or tourist pass) with the use of modern ICT.

Before the appearance of destination cards there was no medium that combined all the tourist attractions and services on a single card in a consistent and clear manner. The tourist card is defined as a destination marketing tool which integrates a variety of tourism services provided by several operators at a discounted inclusive price [Ispas et al. 2015]. This paper seeks to explore the essence of the city destination cards offered in top European capital cities.

The destination cards are issued by tourist stakeholders within a region or a city [Beritelli, Humm 2005]. Their main objective is to bundle the products and services available without the need for booking and buying in advance and to foster higher participation in cultural activities and public transport usage [Pechlaner, Abfalter 2005]. In this way, less visited attractions can increase in value and tourist flows can be spread through the city. Most often tourist cards include: free admission or discounts at museums, churches, monuments, free use of public transportation, and a guidebook with a map. Additionally, they may offer discounts in restaurants, shops, leisure parks, guided tours, events, car rental, bike rental, urban parking, etc. [Integrated... 2014]. Their validity period varies between one to three days, which is the standard length of city tourist stay, but some cities offer cards that can be used for up to a year. The cards are either date stamped or contain an intelligent chip. The latter are usually activated with the first use. Due to the use of a destination card, the tourist experience can be tracked and tailor-made services can be offered [Integrated... 2014]. An additional aim of destination cards is to increase the length of stay of tourists, as they become aware of the available attractions. However, if a destination card does not unite a broad variety of attractions and services, it does not fulfil its role and fails in marketing the destination [Beritelli, Humm 2005].

Yet the main problem in establishing a city card system is the allocation of revenues, called 'the free-rider problem' [Pechlaner, Abfalter 2005]. This means that the appeal of entering a program for its potential members depends on the volume of services actually sold and the revenue share they earn. A critical mass of service providers is needed to set up a successful scheme, while both the largest attractions and services and also a number of other, sometimes smaller players

should be included. On the other hand, too large a number of members is not beneficial either. In such cases it may be necessary to limit the quantity of partners to a manageable number [Integrated... 2014]. The city card infrastructure needs to be widely accessible, which means that readers have to be installed at all participating services which is cost intensive and this is why small providers may require assistance from public partners [Pechlaner, Abfalter 2005].

What should be also mentioned is that apart from the destination cards there are also four other types of tourist cards such as culture, vacation, winter and spa cards. The culture cards complement the role of city cards, but can be used by city residents as well. Vacation cards bring together the attractions on offer in the whole region, winter ones do the same but for winter resorts while guest cards are issued by spas for the health resort visitor [Kerle cited by Pawlicz 2006].

2. Materials and methods

Considering the multitude of tourist services and facilities included in a tourist card, the collaboration between public administrations and different local tourism stakeholders (e.g. museums, theme parks, transport companies, tourism services providers, etc.) is of great importance for the success of such a marketing instrument. The paper therefore aims at working out the model of such a destination card for a large city. Five European capital cities were selected as city destinations which had the largest number of visitors in 2015 according to Euromonitor International (2017). They were as follows: London, Paris, Rome, Prague and Vienna. Most of these destinations have a wide range of integrated collaborative marketing products and the destination cards seem to be the most popular. For a detailed analysis, only destination cards which include at least five out of the top ten tourist attractions in the city were taken into consideration and this is why the Go London Pass and the Prague City Pass were not subject to the examination (Table 1). The facilities offered to their visitors by the destination cards were then analyzed. Altogether there were six passes, since two different ones are offered in Rome. The analysis was based on information placed on both the destination card and the selected attractions official websites, while opinions found on both Trustpilot and TripAdvisor websites were also investigated. The research was conducted in March and April 2017.

The following elements were analysed and compared:

- number of attractions included in the card, with the emphasis on the top ten city attractions, ac-

cording to the top 100 city destinations ranking by Euromonitor International (2017),

- division of attractions into: paid / free of charge and: free with the card / discount with the card,
- characteristics of additional benefits offered,
- validity time and price of cards,
- classification of tourist attractions included those free of charge.

The number of visitors to the destinations and the particular attractions should be treated as estimated. Not all sites use the same methodology for counting visitor numbers, some attractions are free, some are only open for a part of the year. It is also their scope of activities that differs widely from one to another, which limits the value of the comparison. The given data therefore presents an overview of visitor numbers, but is not ranked in order.

3. Results

Six city destination cards were thoroughly examined (Table 1). However, three of them have been introduced and are operated by one international company, the Leisure Pass Group, the sightseeing and tourism technology specialist, which both owns and manages city passes in London and Paris among others (like Berlin, Dublin). They have also created the Leisure Pass Operating System (LPOS) which is the management platform for the destination cards which have been used by Vienna and Prague (Prague City Pass) for their cards, but is also used in other cities across the globe (Helsinki, Blackpool, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Lyon, Gothenburg, York, Antwerp in Europe, Go Singapore in Asia, and New York, Philadelphia, Las Vegas and New Orleans in the United States of America).

Those four cards, which are London, Paris, Prague and Vienna offer their holder the limitless opportunity to visit the attractions included during the time span that it covers. Whereas the two Rome cards which are neither owned nor operated by LPG offer only a limited number of entries to the attractions included in the card.

The London Pass is both the oldest and the most successful among all the city destination cards under research. Since its launch in 1999 it has been used by over 3 million city visitors so far (www.londonpass.com) which makes it the most popular destination card in Europe. There are 71 paid and 13 free attractions included in the pass. The biggest challenge for the pass managers is establishing a successful product of that kind in the city, where nine out of the top ten tourist attractions is free, while the main collections in the public museums are also free. The product may

Table 1. Top 5 capital cities in Europe according to number of tourist arrivals in 2015, and number of visitors to their top 10 tourist attractions.

Attraction	No of visitors	Charge	Pass	Attraction	No of visitors	Charge	Pass		
LONDON, UK, 18 580 000 visitors, WR 3									
British Museum	6,820,686	FREE	✓	Science Museum	3,356,212	FREE	✓		
National Gallery	5,908,254	FREE	✓	Alexandra Park and Palace	2,800,000e	FREE	✗		
Natural History Museum	5,284,023	FREE	✗	Tower of London	2,785,249	PAID	✓		
Tate Modern	4,712,581	FREE	✓	National Portrait Gallery	2,145,486	FREE	✓		
Victoria and Albert Museum	3,888,374	FREE	✗	British Library	1,579,570e	FREE	✗		
PARIS, France, 15 023 000 visitors, WR 5									
Cathédrale Notre-Dame de Paris	13,600,000e	PAID	✓	Centre Pompidou	3,060,000	PAID	✓		
Basilique du Sacré-Cœur de Montmartre	10,000,000e	FREE	✗	Cité des sciences et de l'industrie de la Villette	2,013,046	PAID	✓		
Musée du Louvre	8,422,000	PAID	✓	Chapelle Notre-Dame-de-la-Médaille-miraculeuse	2,000,000	FREE	✗		
Tour Eiffel	6,917,000	PAID	✗	Muséum national d'histoire naturelle Jardin des plantes	1,886,919	PAID	✗		
Musée d'Orsay	3,439,832	PAID	✓	Arc de Triomphe	1,760,694	PAID	✓		
ROME, Italy, 9 558 700 visitors, WR 13									
			Roma Pass	OMNIA			Roma Pass	OMNIA	
The Coliseum	no data	PAID	✓	✓	Capitoline Museums	no data	PAID	✓	✓
St Peter's Basilica	no data	PAID	✗	✓	Piazza di Spagna	no data	FREE	✗	✗
Sistine Chapel & Vatican Museums	no data	PAID	✗	✓	Borghese Gallery	no data	PAID	✓	✓
Roman Forum & Palatine Hill	no data	PAID	✓	✓	Pantheon	no data	FREE	✗	✗
Trevi Fountain	no data	FREE	✗	✗	National Museum of Castel Sant'Angelo	no data	PAID	✓	✓
PRAGUE, Czech Republic, 6 967 400 visitors, WR 22									
Prague Castle	7,421,000	FREE	✓		PIS – PCT – Old Town Hall as a whole	796,913	PAID	✓	
• paying visitors	1,875,814	PAID	discount						
Prague City Museum – total Prague sites	1,239,840	PAID	✓		Jewish Museum in Prague – total Prague sites	629,126	PAID	✓	
Petřín funicular (1. 1. - 6. 9. 2015)	1,479,926	PAID	✓		National Gallery – total Prague sites	543,308	PAID	✓	
Zoological Garden	1,318,382	PAID	✓		Prague Botanical Garden	317,830	PAID	✓	
Aquapalace Resort Praha	996,467	PAD	✗		The Průhonice Park	272,680	FREE	✗	
VIENNA, Austria, 5 718 900 visitors, WR 31									
St. Stephen's Cathedral	5,300,000	FREE	✓		Museum of Natural History	754,800	PAID	✓	
Schönbrunn Palace	2,868,000	PAID	✓		Hofburg Imperial Palace	637,400	PAID	✓	
Schönbrunn Zoo	2,226,400	PAID	✓		Albertina	631,100	PAID	✓	
Art History Museum (as a whole)	1,321,600	PAID	✓		Vienna Aqua Terra Zoo	511,600	PAID	✗	
Austrian Gallery Belvedere	957,800	PAID	✓		Museum of Technology	366,500	PAID	✓	

WR – World Rank, e – estimated; V – included in the Destination Card (Pass), X – not included in the Destination Card (Pass).

Source: Top 100 city destinations ranking, Euromonitor International, 2017, www.londonpass.com, www.parisspass.com, www.romapass.it, www.praguecard.com, <https://www.visitbritain.org/annual-survey-visits-visitor-attractions-latest-results>, www.romeandvaticanpass.com, <http://www.praguecitytourism.cz/en/our-services/statistics-and-analysis-visitor-statistics-for-prague-heritage-sites>, <https://www.wien.gv.at/statistik/pdf/viennainfigures-2016.pdf>, <http://asp.zone-secure.net/v2/index.jsp?id=1203/1515/65204&lng=en>, www.viennapass.com.

be, however, dedicated either to longer-stay tourists or to second-time and repeat visitors, who have already visited the top attractions, but still have not seen the others. First time visitors to London may easily visit the most famous free attractions such as: the British Museum, the National Gallery, the Natural History Museum, the Tate Modern, the Victoria and Albert Museum or the Science Museum. Yet these attractions offer the holders of the London Pass some free additional services, which they would otherwise have to pay for, such as audio guides, entrance to paid exhibitions, IMAX movies etc.

The Paris Pass was launched in 2005. Up to now it has had almost 450 thousand users. There are 63 paid attractions included, among them six out of the top eight paid attractions, such as Cathédrale Notre-Dame de Paris, Musée du Louvre, Musée d'Orsay. The top three tourist attractions are not included in the pass: Basilique du Sacré-Cœur de Montmartre and Chapelle Notre-Dame-de-la-Médaille-Miraculeuse as there is no need for that – where all sightseeing is free.

The Vienna Pass is 'the youngest' since it was launched in January 2015. It offers free entry to over 68 of the most important tourist attractions in Vienna, among them are all the top city landmarks. The only exception is St. Stephen's Cathedral, where sightseeing is free of charge.

Apart from the Leisure Pass Group there are two different and independent destination cards in Rome. The first one – the **Roma Pass** – is sponsored by Rome City Council and the Ministry for the Arts and Cultural Activities and Tourism, in collaboration with ATAC (the public transport company). It is a special tourist-cultural card dedicated both to tourists and local residents, therefore it has a slightly different form than others which are analyzed in the paper. The card includes free entry to the first two (in the case of the 72-hour card) or the first (48-hour card) visited museums and/or archaeological sites of choice from among the 40 paid attractions in Roma. The top attractions of the Vatican are however not included, i.e. St Peter's Basilica, the Sistine Chapel and the Vatican Museums.

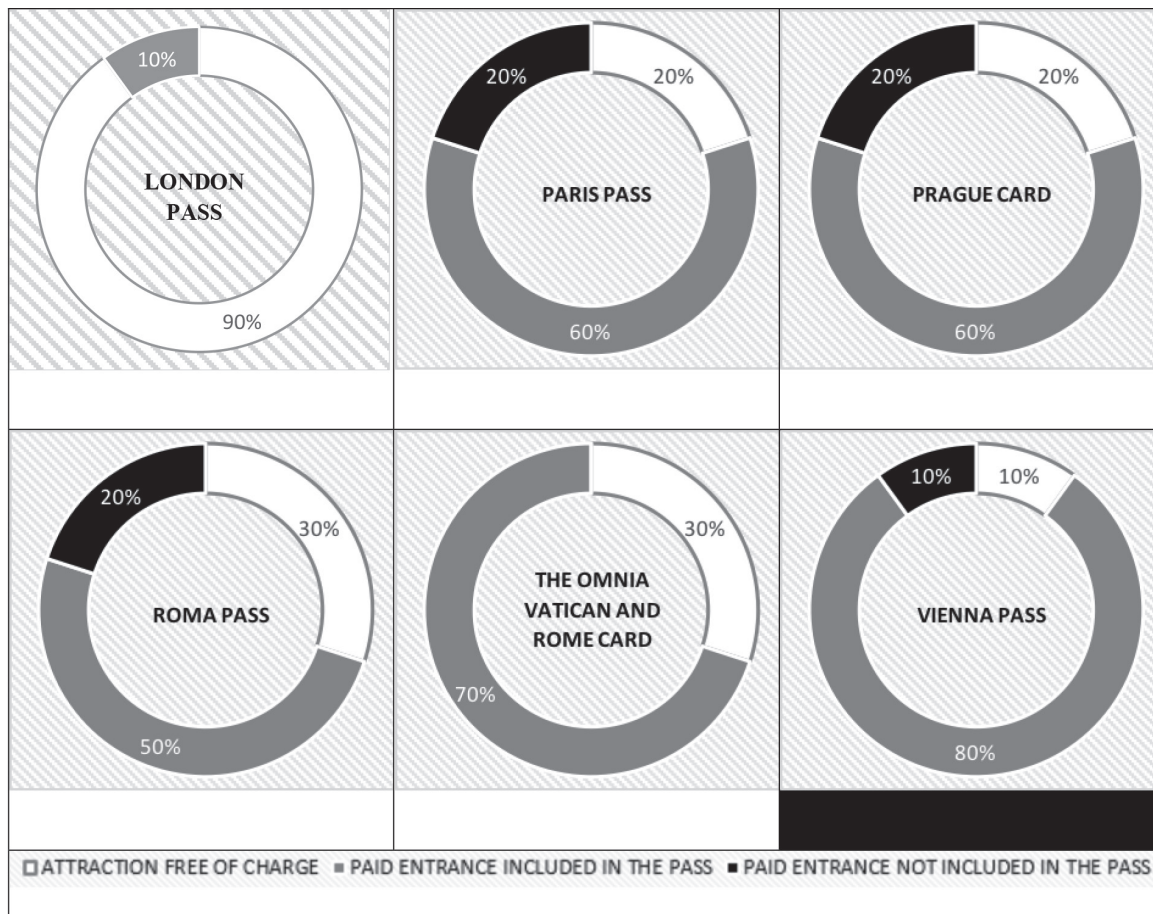
For comparison, the alternative **OMNIA Vatican & Rome Card**, available from January 2013, includes the services provided by Roma Pass (two out of the top six Rome attractions including The Coliseum, Roman Forum and Palatine Hill, Capitolini Museums, Borghese Gallery and the National Museum of Castel Sant'Angelo) and gives the holder free entry to the top three attractions in Vatican City: Saint Peter's Basilica, the Vatican Museums and the Sistine Chapel, St John in the Lateran and the Cloister. The card is operated by Opera Romana Pellegrinaggi. Moreover,

there is also an entry discounted to 28 other attractions in Rome.

The Prague Card offers free entry to 50 attractions and a discount for 62 other ones, among them eight out of the top ten landmarks in Prague. The only paid attraction which is not included is the Aquapalace Resort Praha.

As far as the structure of attractions included in the destination card is considered, the solutions adopted differ between the cities (Figure 1). The biggest challenge is to make a destination card attractive when there are main attractions free of charge like in London. However, the popularity of the London Pass and the comments found in social media prove that this inconveniences have been successfully overcome due to extending the offered attractions which are usually paid for, and also through offering longer-term validity of the cards which makes them more attractive for visits in paid attractions as well. From between the two Rome cards Omnia seems to be more attractive as it offers more possibilities to visit also paid attractions. However, it is the Vienna Card which is the most attractive of all when the structure is considered since it encompasses the largest share of paid attractions in its range.

The London, Paris and Vienna cards are very similar concerning the typology of attractions (Figure 2). All of them focus on the most popular tourist attractions such as museums, galleries and historic buildings. In the case of paid attractions, the Prague Card is very similar to the three mentioned above. Most cards offer additional discounts and special prices, but only the Prague card website distinguishes all of the additional wide variety of discounts very precisely (62 additional sights and special offers). Both Rome cards are characterized by a completely different management approach. The Roma Pass includes only museums together with archeological sites. The OMNIA Vatican and Rome Card offer three top Vatican attractions next to the top six Rome attractions. Tours and cruises are included in the London, Paris, Vienna and Prague cards, some of them are one of the most iconic ways to experience cities, e.g. the London-hop-on-and-hop-off Bus Tour or the Thames River Boat Cruise. The term *places of interest* encompasses attractions for families, shows, experiences and exhibitions, e.g. ZSL London Zoo, The London Bridge Experience, Kew Gardens in London, the wine tasting tour at Les Caves du Louvre in Paris, the Paris Aquarium, and Schönbrunn Zoo in Vienna. The denotation *monuments* means certain attractions in Paris like The Arc de Triomphe, Montparnasse Tower, Panthéon and in Vienna: Vienna Giant Ferris Wheel, Danube Tower, Klosterneuburg



* Figure 1 includes only attractions which are offered for the pass holders for free. All attractions and facilities with discounts and special offer are not included.

Fig. 1. The top ten most popular tourist attractions in the researched cities and their charge and presence in the destination card range

Source: own elaboration based on: www.londonpass.com; www.parispass.com; www.romapass.it; <https://www.visitbritain.org/annual-survey-visits-visitor-attractions-latest-results>; www.romeandvaticanpass.com; www.viennapass.com; www.praguecard.com; <http://asp.zone-secure.net/v2/index.jsp?id=1203/1515/65204&lng=en>; <http://www.praguecitytourism.cz/en/our-services/statistics-and-analysis-visitor-statistics-for-prague-heritage-sites>; <https://www.wien.gv.at/statistik/pdf/viennainfigures-2016.pdf>.

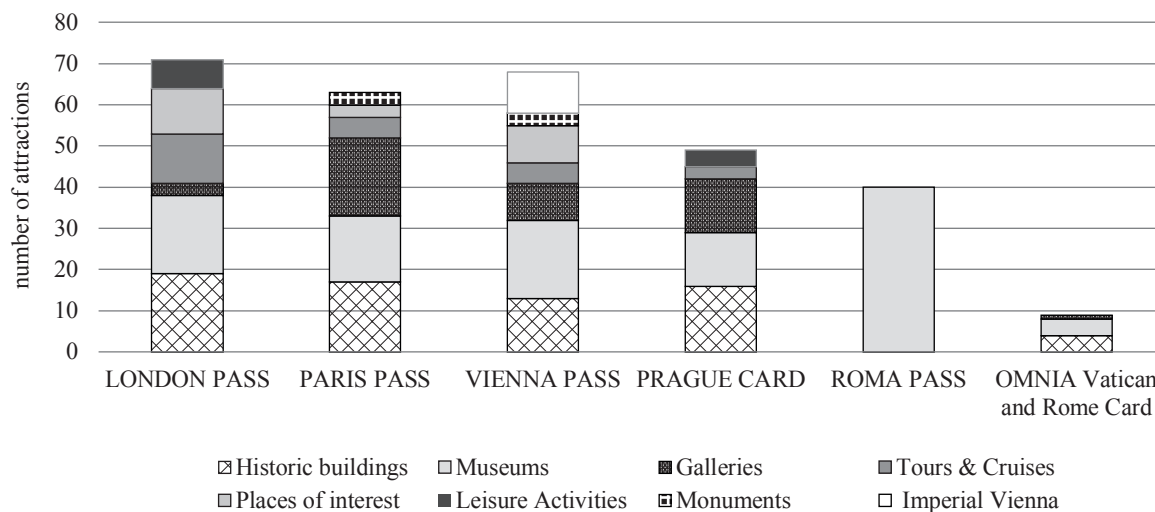


Fig. 2. Classification of free of charge tourist attractions included in destination cards

Source: own elaboration based on: www.londonpass.com; www.parispass.com; www.romapass.it; www.romeandvaticanpass.com; www.viennapass.com; www.praguecard.com.

Table 2. Characteristics of additional benefits of researched destination cards, 2017

	LONDON PASS	PARIS PASS	ROMA PASS	THE OMNIA VATICAN AND ROME CARD	PRAGUE CARD	VIENNA PASS
A FREE SMART PHONE APP	✓					✓
A GUIDEBOOK	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A MAP	✓	✓	✓	✓		
A HOP-ON, HOP-OFF BUS TOUR	1-DAY	1-DAY		✓	2 HOURS	✓
SELECTED SKIP THE LINE PRIVILEGES	✓	✓		✓		✓
SPECIAL OFFERS FOR EVENTS / EXHIBITIONS / RESTAURANTS / SHOPS ETC.	✓	✓	✓		✓	
MONEY BACK GUARANTEE*	✓	✓				✓
MOBILE TICKET**	✓					
TRAVELCARD	OPTIONAL	✓	✓	✓	✓	
CHILDREN DISCOUNTS	30%	40 -70%		70%	25%	50%

* for all obligatory online orders, ** tourist pass on Smartphone device.

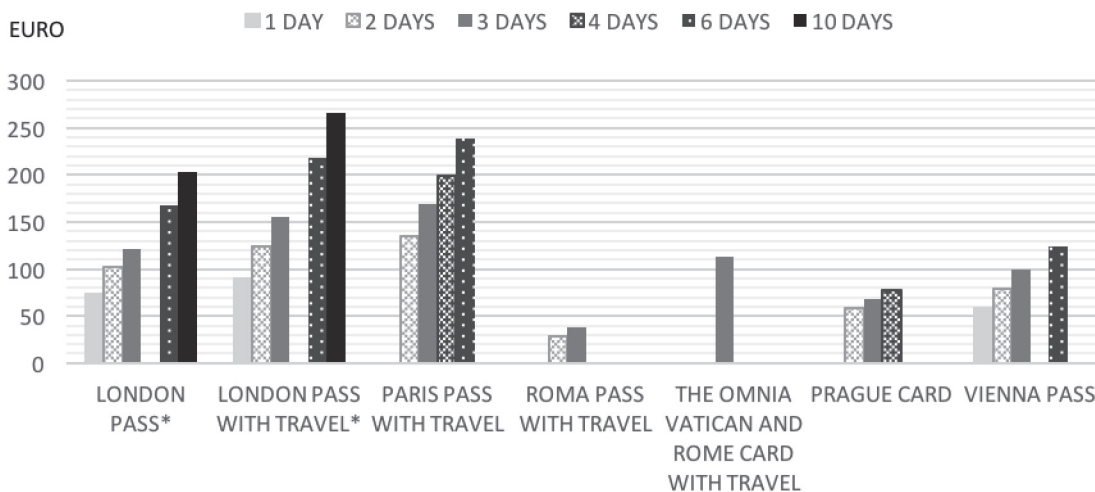
Source: own elaboration based on: www.londonpass.com; www.parispass.com; www.romapass.it; www.romeandvaticanpass.com; www.viennapass.com; www.praguecard.com.

Monastery. There is a separate category dedicated just to Vienna: *Imperial Vienna* including the Schönbrunn Palace Grand Tour and the Maria Theresa Exhibition 2017. The number of tourist attractions included in the selected destination cards is constantly growing. There are, however, also some of the most important paid attractions which are not included in the scope of destination cards, such as The London Eye, Madam Tussaud’s Wax Museum, the Houses of Parliament in London, and the Eiffel Tower in Paris.

There are a few **additional standard benefits of city destination cards studied** (Table 2). They claim to provide city visitors with the most time and cost-efficient product in order to facilitate and benefit their experience. Some of the benefits are brand new and **distinguish one pass from another**. An example here can be the smartphone application launched in August 2016 which offered London Pass buyers the opportunity to use its new mobile version. Another feature of the London Pass is a mobile ticket version of the card. Other benefits are **standard** and provided by the majority of city destination cards such as a guidebook to the visited city, available in several languages, a map, a hop-on-hop-off bus tour available from 2 hours (Prague) through one day (London, Paris) to the whole validity time of a card like in Rome and Vienna. Furthermore, most of the cards provide special offers or discounts for restaurants (e.g. a Dining Guide for the London Card with huge discounts at over 145 premises) or discounts for transport, day trips and

shopping (Vienna, Prague). Moreover, there is an option called ‘Money Back Guarantee’ which means that any online purchase can be 100% refunded before a certain time of cancellation. As one of the most important advantages destination cards offer time savings through the option ‘skip the line’. When some sights can get very busy, particularly in the summer months or weekends, then the busiest attractions can offer card holders Fast Track Entry privileges. Most of the cards include unlimited journeys on the city local public transportation system. In the case of London this is optional and in Vienna the travel card can be purchased additionally. **Additional discounts** are limited mainly to discounts for children, which vary from 70% (Paris Pass, OMNIA) to none (Roma Pass). In all cases, the passes only allow a single entry to each attraction, a second visit is not allowed. Also no cards offer any further discounts for groups, seniors, students or disabled guests. The only exception here is the Prague card with a 25% discount for students. There are some additional privileges for small children, e.g. a Vienna Pass holder accompanying a child under 6 is allowed to visit for free. The opposite approach occurs with the Roma Pass - its purchase is not recommended for children under 10 years of age.

The validity time of the researched city destination cards under research vary from one to ten days (Figure 3). The largest choice is offered in London, followed by Paris and Vienna. The system is not developed in both Roma cards and is only limited to



* official prices given in GBP – calculated £1 = €1.2.

Fig. 3. Validity time and price of the researched destination cards, 2017

Source: own elaboration based on: www.londonpass.com; www.parispass.com; www.romapass.it;_www.romeandvaticanpass.com; www.viennapass.com; www.praguecard.com.

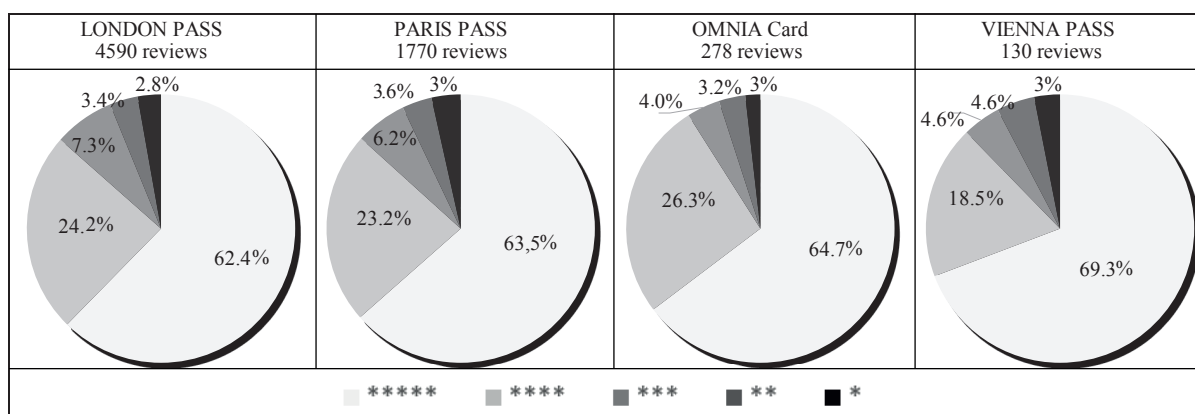


Fig. 4. Reviews of city destination cards on trustpilot.com, 2017

Source: own elaboration based on: www.trustpilot.com.

three choices in Prague. There is a certain relation: the longer validity of the card – the better its value. On average with a card of 3 or more days visiting three attractions a day should save money on the combined entry fees. With a one or two day pass visiting four and more places would make it really worth buying the card.

Also the prices of city destination cards are very diverse. When the same validity time is concerned, the most expensive for two days is the London Pass (£103), the cheapest is the Rome Pass (€28). Interestingly, the Vienna Pass has an advantage over other cards since its price for longer validity time is much lower than the London Pass of comparative lengths.

In order to evaluate the market appraisal of the range of the cards under research their customers’ reviews on trustpilot.com site were analyzed. The London, Paris and Vienna cards quote Trustpilot statistics on their official websites, the Vienna Pass operator even employs people to answer all weak or negative comments on the site. However, the appraisal altogether is very positive. All the four cards reviewed have more than 60% of very good opinions (Figure 4). Satisfied customers highlight that the offered card combines everything that is needed for a tourist stay. They often state that it is a very easy, convenient and simple way of sightseeing the city with benefits such as money and time savings. They also recommend longer periods of card validity.

4. Discussion

According to Ispas et al. [2015], tourist destination cards have proven to be effective marketing instruments in worldwide tourism destinations. From among the different tourist cards they are the most popular and play an important role in their promotion [Pawlicz 2006]. The research on the six European capital cities confirms these statements since they attract a large and growing numbers of customers, which has been shown by statistics and positive comments of customers are prevailing on the websites to share the reviews.

The capital city cards that have been analysed in this paper, except for one, represent a typical model of a destination card, only the Roma Pass seems to be a mixed type of culture/destination card which is offered not only visitors but also to city inhabitants according to the Kerle proposal (cited by [Pawlicz 2006]). Destination cards are used to commercialize an area and its resources by bonding together a series of tourist services. In particular, the number of attractions, but also a public transportation, are essential elements of the offered product. Empirical data shown by other studies have already confirmed that combined tickets have a reasonable effect on public transport usage, even among car users [Integrated... 2014]. The different ratio of paid and non-paid attractions observed in the city cards analysed, is compatible with the results of Pawlicz [2006] who compared the destination cards offered by six Baltic cities. Also the wide range of additional benefits proposed by the researched city cards is consistent with other reports [Integrated... 2014].

The card gives the holders a series of benefits in terms of time and cost savings according to Ispas et al. [2015], and it has also been proven by the results of the research. The combined effect is therefore a better tourist experience, which improves the destination's image and competitive advantage over its competitors.

The structure of attractions included in destination cards is differentiated as far as the paid/free option is considered. What is striking however is the fact that the least potential attractiveness in cases of offering free sites can be overcome due to certain managerial responses like offering a wide choice of additional services and prolonging the validity of the pass.

The time validity differs between cities but in the majority of cases the time frame of cards is compatible with the most common duration of city trips (one to three days) therefore it can be said that urban tourism is closely linked to the short-break market [Tourism 2020 Vision, UNWTO 2002].

5. Conclusion

The destination card system is a new solution introduced to the tourism product range of many cities in order to counteract difficulties created by the large number and differentiation of stakeholders creating the tourist product within the urbanized area on one hand and the density of its physical structures and economy on the other. Facing the growing saturation of the market of urban tourism they are trying to find a competitive advantage through bundling separate products and creating an aggregated tourist experience.

All of the analyzed capital cities belong to the top city destinations of Europe and offer a destination card in the majority of cases based on the experience of one company, the Leisure Pass Group. Even when doing so, their range differs depending on the will for cooperation displayed by local stakeholders and city councils. Two Rome cards have been created independently but their scope seems to be the weakest.

As far as the destination card structure is considered, the most important aspect seems to be the cultural attractions with those man-made for tourism and historic ones. Much more important from the point of view of the card management is the question whether they are paid or not. In such a case, although the paid attractions included seem to offer many more advantages for visitors, the example of the London Pass proves that even if they are free, additional services offered within the card can help overcome this deficiency. Equally important is the public transportation included since it again increases the economic value of the card. Additional services have become a kind of standard already, such as a guidebook, map, hop-on tourist bus services, and discounts for restaurants, shops and events. Here also innovativeness counts, and new solutions based on new technologies are introduced, like smart-phone apps and mobile ticketing, thus increasing the total value of the card for the visitor. However not many further discounts are operational since the card's basic attractiveness relies on its better economic value for the visitor.

The validity periods for destination cards differ, but the longer ones seem to have proven their higher value for visitors, like in the case of London. Thanks to their longer duration they can fulfill additional functions as discussed in the introduction like spreading the tourist traffic across the city and attracting visitors to lesser known attractions.

The popularity and very high evaluation of destination cards based on the example of the analyzed six cases of main capital city destinations in Europe prove this sort of marketing collaborative

product of the city to be the right tool in strengthening both the competitive position and the image on the tourist market.

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MODEL TURYSTYCZNEJ KARTY MIEJSKIEJ JAKO NARZĘDZIE MARKETINGOWE WYBRANYCH MIAST EUROPEJSKICH

Streszczenie: Turystyka miejska należy do najsilniejszych trendów na międzynarodowym rynku turystycznym, zwłaszcza w Europie, gdzie znajduje się osiem z dwudziestu największych destynacji miejskich świata. W obliczu rosnącej konkurencji te miejskie destynacje muszą jednak szukać nowych rozwiązań marketingowych, aby wzmocnić swoją pozycję i atrakcyjność dla potencjalnych odwiedzających. Jedną z nich jest turystyczna karta miejska, która integruje wiele usług turystycznych, świadczonych przez kilku operatorów, po obniżonej cenie. Celem tego artykułu jest omówienie modelu karty miejskiej dla dużego miasta. Aby osiągnąć ten cel, wybrano pięć największych europejskich stolic (na podstawie kryterium liczby odwiedzających): Londyn, Paryż, Rzym, Pragę i Wiedeń i na podstawie analizy danych wtórnych przeprowadzono analizę porównawczą kart miejskich oferowanych w tych miastach. Na podstawie wyników badań, a także odnosząc się do literatury przedmiotu, sformułowano wnioski dotyczące typowej struktury karty i jej dodatkowych elementów w kontekście marketingu turystycznego.

Słowa kluczowe: stolice europejskie, turystyczna karta miejska, turystyka miejska, marketing usług turystycznych.