

Masters in Tourism and Communication

INTERNSHIP REPORT: WEDDING TOURISM IN PORTUGAL



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Lisbon, October 2016

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Internship report presented to the Estoril Higher Institute for Tourism and Hotel Studies for compliance with the requirements for the degree of Master in Tourism and Communication

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ABSTRACT

This report is part of the Master's degree in tourism, specialization in Tourism and Communications, following the rules of the course, leading to the achievement of the degree of Master's by Escola Superior de Hotelaria e Turismo do Estoril.

One of the main purposes of this internship report is to do a research about wedding tourism for Russian – Speaking clients in Portugal. This internship report aims to analyse a wedding organization system used for symbolic and official weddings and to show the growth and importance of wedding tourism as a new niche of tourism for countries who embrace it and taking Portugal as a particular case, where the internship was done.

The Internship had a duration of 3,5 months in the wedding agency “StudioVictorias” which is located in Lisbon. The wedding agency started to use the questionnaires for couples in order to help understanding couple’s wishes and desires regarding the organization of weddings. I have analysed 12 questionnaires from 6 weddings where I participated as an assistant of wedding planner and as a tour guide. The results show that couples decide to have a beautiful and unusual wedding abroad, planning their wedding with the help of weddings agencies, and looking places on the coast of the ocean, or in a romantic old castle to have a pleasant recordation of the moment and atmosphere for the rest of a lifetime.

A wedding in another country is a dream of many couples and it can be a big opportunity for Portugal to attract a new type of tourist, because Portugal is a small story for newlyweds and their guests, transforming dreams into reality.

Based on internship report findings, I propose several recommendations that can help the agency to attract more clients and suggestions for future research on this field.

Key words: wedding, Portugal, wedding tourism.

SUMÁRIO

O presente relatório decorre no âmbito do Mestrado em Turismo, especialização em Turismo e Comunicações de acordo com as regras do curso, requerido para obtenção de um grau de mestrado pela Escola Superior de Hotelaria e Turismo do Estoril.

Um dos principais objetivos deste relatório de estágio é fazer uma pesquisa sobre o turismo de casamento para clientes de língua russa em Portugal. Este relatório de estágio visa analisar um sistema de organização de casamentos usado para casamentos simbólicos e oficiais mostrando o crescimento e a importância do turismo de casamento como um novo nicho de turismo para os países que o acolham, usando Portugal como análise de estudo, local onde o estágio foi feito.

O estágio teve a duração de 3,5 meses na agência de casamentos "StudioVictorias", que está localizada em Lisboa. A agência de casamentos começou a usar os questionários para os casais, a fim de ajudar a compreender os desejos e as expectativas do casal sobre a organização do casamento. Analisei 12 questionários a partir de 6 casamentos onde participei como assistente de organizadora de casamento e como guia de turismo. Os resultados mostram que os casais decidem ter um casamento bonito e incomum no exterior, planeando o seu casamento com a ajuda de agências de casamento e escolhendo lugares como a costa do oceano, ou um velho castelo romântico para ter uma recordação agradável do momento e atmosfera para o resto de uma vida.

Um casamento realizado noutro país é um sonho de muitos casais e pode ser uma grande oportunidade para Portugal atrair um novo tipo de turista, porque Portugal é uma pequena história para os noivos e seus convidados, transformando os seus sonhos em realidade.

Com base nas descobertas do relatório de estágio, proponho várias recomendações que podem ajudar a agência a atrair mais clientes e sugestões para futuras pesquisas neste campo.

Palavras Chaves: casamento, Portugal, turismo de casamento.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ESHTE – Escola Superior de Hotelaria e Turismo do Estoril

IGOT – Instituto de Geografia e Ordenamento do Território

INE – Instituto Nacional de Estatística

FLUL – Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Lisboa

SWOT – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats.

INTRODUCTION

This work is conducted within the framework of the Master in Tourism and Communications instructed by Escola Superior de Hotelaria e Turismo do Estoril (ESHTE) and designed to provide a description and analysis of wedding agency "StudioVictorias", where I had an Internship as a personal assistant and a tourist guide from 9th October of 2015 until 31th January of 2016.

The internship was very interesting and non-standard; it helped me to deepen knowledge in the field of tourism, especially in a new tourism sector as wedding tourism.

The study of the subject will not only explore this niche of tourism but also the impacts on the economy countries that hold it.

The first part of the Internship Report describes the literature review on the topic found about tourism and linked with the wedding and wedding tourism. The second part defines the methodology used on which I will describe type of methods used to get the data needed for the study. The third part is about the Internship and is where I present the company where my internship took place, a summary of my tasks and functions and an overview about the market of wedding tourism based on the internship. The fourth section describes the data analysis, on the basis of the results where will be built discussions and recommendations. The last part will be the conclusion, where I am getting the result on the basis of all the work with the final results of the internship with personal suggestions and recommendations for a more successful wedding agency business.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1.INTRODUCTION

This chapter will begin with the concept of wedding and its meaning, starting from the point of history where probably appeared, as per studies already done on this field, to the paper in society and its importance along the time, transforming and leading to unpredictable changes, where opportunities emerged and new professions and businesses, which not existed before, were created in the recent years. Wedding tourism abroad was one of them, which will be the focus subject of this study. The arising of wedding tourism will be approached as well as their importance for the countries that host them. Also important will be the fact to find out the reasons and motivations behind the choice of a wedding abroad and trace the typical tourist profile, based on the literature found about the subject.

1.2.WEDDING HISTORY

The celebration of a wedding between two people and the beginning into a new life together is an important and symbolic event that usually will be recorded not only in tape but also in newlywed's memory and of all members that attend the wedding. According to Baron & Byrne (1987) the emotions of the couple lead them to plan a wedding and then make the wedding memorable. The socio-cultural context also influences the couple to have a wedding. For Appadurai (1997) wedding represent a rite of passage in the eyes of the law and of everyone around them, while for Leeds (2002) wedding is a display of a serious lifetime commitment and devotion and mark the beginning of marriage. Nevertheless, the image that we usually have from wedding ceremonies has not always been as we know it today.

There is no record where was held the first wedding and maybe we will never know but it was a remarkable point which changed the human culture and society. The first recorded evidence of marriage contracts and ceremonies dates to four thousand (4.000) years ago, in Mesopotamia. The introduction of the church in marriage comes only in Ancient Rome when marriage was a civil affair governed by imperial law, but after the collapse of the Roman Empire, in the 5th century A.D., church courts took over and raised marriage to a holy union. The church power grew through the Middle Ages (5th to the 15th century), so did its influence over marriage. In 1215, marriage was

declared one of the church's seven sacraments, alongside with the rites like baptism and penance. It was only in the 16th century church decreed that weddings would be performed in public, by a priest, and before witnesses. However, for much of human history it was rare that love was the main reason for people to get married, served primarily as a mean of preserving power, with kings and other members of the ruling class marrying daughters to forge alliances, acquire land, and produce legitimate heirs.

Until very recently, many civilizations believed in the economic functions of a marriage over personal satisfactions (The Week, 2012). Marriages were made for family and economic benefits, with the hope that the marriage would result in love later on (Coontz, 2006). In the 12th and 13th centuries, extramarital affairs were considered as the highest form of romance. Even until the 18th century, this behavior was promoted by the French philosopher Montesquieu, who wrote that any man who was in love with his wife was probably too dull to be loved by another woman (The Week, 2012).

Love started to gain some importance in marriage only in 17th and 18th centuries, when a new line of thought from an intellectual movement, known as Enlightenment¹, come with the idea that the meaning of life was about the pursuit of happiness, marrying for love rather than wealth or status. The Industrial Revolution, in 19th century, marks the increase of this tendency, where a new freedom was achieved in the marriage. The growth of the middle class enabled men to pay for a wedding and choose their future wife, regardless of parental approval.

Divorce started to be more common, once people controlled more their love lives, claiming the right to end unhappy unions, especially after Women's Rights and Feminist Movement started to gain more strength in the late 19th and 20th centuries. Wives became to have more active voice in society and they began to demand the same rights and be treated as their husbands, instead of being their property. By 1970, marriage law had become gender-neutral in occidental democracy (Yalom, 2001). The rise of effective contraception fundamentally transformed marriage: how many children to have, or even to have no children at all started to be choices that couples could take and approved by society. Marriage had become primarily a personal contract between two equals seeking love, stability, and happiness (The Week, 2012).

¹ Intellectual movement appeared in Europe in the 18th century, which ideas was centered on reason as the primary source of authority and legitimacy, and advanced with ideals such as liberty, progress, tolerance, fraternity, constitutional government, and separation of church and state.

However the role of marriage should not be trivialized and undervalued as its symbolic value is seen as a building block in the construction and maintenance of a family. Its meaning for the couple and the family thereof, continues to be associated with vows of fidelity, respect and support between the couple which helps to promote affection and harmony, essential for creating a family, where limits and rules are delimited by the commitment made through this event, helping to create a healthy and harmonious connection within the couple and sharing it with the rest of the future family (children).

1.3.WEDDING AS A NEW TYPE OF TOURISM

Marriage is an event with many ethnic and religious traditions, whose celebration differs from culture to culture. However, the massification of it and globalization itself has made some tendencies in the celebration on this event, although many of them continue to be celebrated according to the traditions of their ancestors. The wedding dress is an example and today the white color is the most widely used due in part to the popularization of Queen Victoria² marriage in 1840, which chose this color instead of the traditional royal silver wedding dress. Prior to this, brides simply wore their best dress on their wedding day (Island Weddings, 2016).

Tossing rice is another tradition which survived until our days and was diffused around the world by believing that newlyweds brought good luck. Guests used to throw nuts and grains to them to insure an abundant harvest, and many children to work the land. During the years of poor harvest, rice was tossed instead. This tradition continues today with rice, birdseed, or bubbles to wish the bride and groom health and happiness.

Although many of these traditions are symbolic of the wedding celebration, many of which are now carried out without the proper knowledge of the meaning of them. One of the most known traditions relating to marriage is the honeymoon. However the origin is often unknown for most people. The term comes back to the early marriages which were literally carried out by the groom with the help of some men of his trust, to kidnap a woman from another tribe and after the capture the groom hide his new bride for one month for mating purposes. It is said that the word "honeymoon" was created to describe this one month cycle of the moon when they would drink mead,

² Queen Victoria was the queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland from 1837 to 1901—the second longest reign of any other British monarch in history.

which was a honey sweetened alcoholic brew that affects both sobriety and the acidity of the womb, thus increasing fertility (Island Weddings, 2016).

Nowadays, the honeymoon is a traditional vacation taken by a newlywed couple immediately after their wedding celebration is over. Generally, it can last anywhere from a week to a month, though it is sometimes of a shorter or longer duration. Honeymoons are often celebrated in destinations considered exotic or romantic. (Wikipedia, 2016a). This term is also linked to tourism due to the fact that many destinations chosen for the honeymoon are done in a different country of newlyweds one. This opened space to the wedding tourism, as a new type of wedding done abroad as well as a new type of tourism, particularly not common some years ago. The idea to marry abroad has also been influenced by the honeymoon and some newlyweds decide to celebrate the wedding in the same place as the honeymoon. Being always a special day for the people who share it, the meaning of this event on couple's life led them to get the most memorable and unique wedding possible. While in the past there was implicit the idea that weddings had to be formal and follow the usual and acceptable standards of this type of ceremony, in the last 20 years there was a huge turnover in the way that they were celebrated. Couples now have a vast set of choices to plan their wedding which open the horizons of their imagination. Couples are often older than before, more well-traveled and usually they opt for something more exotic or different from the traditional wedding celebration in their country.

Wedding tourism appears in this context, which is travelling internationally for the purpose of getting married or celebrating a wedding (Acorn Consulting Partnership Ltd., 2008). Consequently, today wedding tourism is considered as a niche inside of the tourism market. It increased in popularity over the past decade and in 2014 was estimated that about 15% of all weddings in world were destination weddings (BrideBox Wedding Albums, 2014). Lower costs, competitive packages, the increasing of international flights as well as the changes of consumer habits are some of the reasons for this escalating demand (Major, McLeay & Waine, 2010).

Weddings have become a commodity, providing opportunities for each host destination and to market itself as a place where special life event can be commemorated in an unforgettable way (Boden, 2001). However, not all destinations have the attractiveness and the resources to play in this market. Wedding tourism is chosen by couples regarding also the desirability for new and different place from the native countries of newlyweds, providing different sensations and pleasure moments.

Places with favorable weather conditions and natural beauty are the most popular among couples but infrastructures are essential to make the link between attractiveness and commodity, offering special scenery with a high quality service, as well as advertisement, to reach and stimulate the couple's interest that are looking for a wedding place.

1.4.WEDDING TOURISM MOTIVATIONS AND DESTINATIONS

For this section it was particularly difficult to find literature that approach the motivation applied to the wedding tourism. The affirmations and ideas provided in this segment were based on the few literature found indirectly linked to the subject and in personal reflections.

Motivation is defined as the process that initiates, guides, and maintains goal-oriented behaviors. Motivation is what causes us to act, whether it is getting a glass of water to reduce thirst or reading a book to gain knowledge (Cherry, 2016). It has been discussed by a myriad of authors linking it to people's behavior, desires or needs. In previous years, human motivation has been studied extensively in social sciences, in order to understand what leads an individual to be attracted and to consume a certain product (Neves, 2010).

Although motivation is only one variable explaining tourism behavior, it is regarded as one of the most important variables because it is an impelling and compelling force behind a behavior (Crompton, 1979). From a large diversity of theories that try to explain the tourist motivations the theory of Push and Pull factors is the generally accepted (Crompton, 1979). Push and Pull factors in recreational travel help account for travel patterns in the world today on the local, national, and international levels (Uysal and Jurowski, 1994). This concept starts from the idea that people travel because they are pushed and pulled by forces that influence their behavior. These forces (motivational factors) describe how individuals are pushed by motivational variables into making a travel decision and how they are pulled (attracted) by the destination area (Uysal and Hagan, 1993). According to Gnoth (1997), push factors are defined as internal motives or forces that cause tourists to seek activities to reduce their needs, while pull factors are destination generated forces and the knowledge that tourists hold about a destination. Push factors are considered intangible or intrinsic desires of the individual travelers such as the desire for escape, rest and relaxation, health and fitness, adventure, prestige, and social interaction. Pull factors are those that

comes from the attractiveness of a destination as it is received by the traveler. They include tangible resources such as beaches, recreation facilities and historic resources as well as traveler's perceptions and expectation such as novelty, benefit expectation and marketing image of the destination (Uysal and Hagan, 1993). Crompton (1979) and Bello and Etzel (1985) found that push factors are considered important in initiating travel desire, while pull factors are considered more decisive in explaining destination choice.

Regarding the wedding tourism subject, it becomes important to understand the specific motivations that take people to celebrate the wedding abroad as also the choice of the destination itself. The motivations vary from couple to couple and not all share the same motivations and take this decision from the same starting point. However, the most important and recognized reasons that affect the decision are: social motivations as prestige and status, economic motivations like saving money and not exceed the budget, and other personal motives, such as the celebration of this event in a unique way and place, especially outside of the traditional local where the bride and groom live. These motivations are the Pull factors that internally influence the decision of the couple in wedding abroad since they are intrinsic to the individual. Regarding destination choice to celebrate the wedding ceremony other factors are taking into consideration, which are external to the individual and characterize the destination. Natural environment, local legislation about weddings, culture, accommodations, food and beverage services, transportation and travel services are the type of factors, known as Push factors which influence the destination choice by the side of couples.

1.5.OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN WEDDING TOURISM

As mentioned before wedding tourism has impact in industries around the place where a wedding is taking place mainly due to the diversity of services required to hold a ceremony of this kind. The financial impacts of wedding tourism are strong, particularly since consumers tend to be more concerned with quality than price (Kim & Agrusa, 2005). There are tremendous opportunities on this type of tourism because is recent and the interest around them is growing fast. According to Mintel (2010), in United Kingdom, one in five weddings takes place abroad and this segment of tourism increased 27 percent from 2005 to 2010. The number of guests attending to the wedding abroad is important as well once they bring value to the host country by increasing the wedding costs and cost values spent on transportation, accommodation, food or rental

services. It was reported an increasing on the number of guests at destination weddings, from an average of 20 to 40 people several years ago, and, as of 2004, was approximately 60 to 90 guests (Adler & Chienm, 2004).

Another appetizer on this market is the fact that wedding tourist tend to be higher spending target market than typical vacationers, because they want to enjoy a unique and memorable experience to the fullest extent available (Kim & Agrusa, 2005). With all of this demand generated by wedding tourism, new jobs are created to provide all the services and goods needed to this industry, local economy will beneficiate with the growing of the tourism and new companies will be formed to absorb all of this demand.

But how these opportunities are created inside of wedding tourism? To answer to this question it is important to understand that not all destinations have the resources and attractiveness features to exploit this market. There are factors such as the weather, the nature, the culture that have a big influence to this market and contributes to it flourish in country. Usually, countries with beaches, warm weather and considered as exotic are the top preferences, especially to take the honeymoon, but there is a big increase over the years in weddings abroad. Caribbean, Mexico, Mauritius, Cyprus, Italy and Greece are locations very popular due to the combination between climate and nature (Major, McLeay & Waine, 2010). Culture as well attracts couples and can influence the choice of a destination wedding once people like to discover and meet places regarding the history, gastronomy and monuments provided by the host country and also romantic scenarios and landscapes which are the most desirable for this type of demand.

However, all of these features cannot be enough to insure a big return from this market. There are plenty of places that have the potential to attract an endless of profit but they do not have the core of the business and is here where the challenges begin to these countries get their share of the market. First of all infrastructures are essential and a big investment should be done on it. The accommodations, transportation network and entertainment services are examples and have to be placed on strategic places where all the potential can be achieved. Second is the advertisement. It is so important because it shows the country to the outside. Is the brand image, have the power to influence people and inform them what has the country to offer. The promotion of wedding services has to be linked with country advertising in order to take all the returns from the interest created by the country. Without that, advertising is useless since wedding tourism

emerges from the attractiveness and conditions of the destiny. Third factor is legal requirements. Every country has their regulations and to develop this specific type of tourism, the law has to be clear and allow in a legal way this type of ceremonies inside of the country between foreign couples.

Several other popular destinations miss the opportunities of this market, despite of having a large potential. Weather is not only one factor in making these attractive wedding tourism destinations, but also the legal requirements that facilitates the process of obtaining marriage licenses and that minimize pre-wedding residence requirements (Major, McLeay & Waine, 2010). The law cannot be an obstacle or even a complicated process for this type for civil marriage between foreigners, and adjustments in the law are often the answer to overcome the problems and avoid a lengthy legal process, increasing the interest for the celebration of marriage in these destinations. Of course, these factors only can be achieved with an enormous investment from the country and that will create the opportunities and the conditions to this sector grow inside of tourism.

1.6. WEDDING PLANNERS IN TOURISM

Planning a wedding is a demanding task that requires close attention to the detail and connection with the various services that make possible the celebration of the same, starting in the choice of the date of the event until the place where will be celebrated.

Most weddings require a year of planning (BrideBox Weddings Albums, 2014) with plenty decisions to be made by the couple involving a good management of their time on the organization of such event. However, from the evolution of modern times most couples are marrying much later in life. The career is one of the major factors that help to explain this condition, with variable time decreasing among couples and necessary for wedding planning. As a consequence, and in accordance with the economic capacities of each couple, the wedding planner comes as a professional career in order to give assistance on the organization of a ceremony. Although the available time of the couples has been reducing, financially their situation has improved which enabled the development the wedding planner to a professional level. Today, many couples choose to hire the wedding planner due also to the convenience that they offer, because they know better than anyone the services and the necessary preparations for holding a wedding and may even reduce the costs involved with the event, as they have

a deeper knowledge of the prices of the various service providers that typically provide this type of event.

But how emerged the planners Weddings? The professional wedding planner's role evolved over the years. Since the marriage between a man and a woman was made possible, there were always people in charge of arranging all the details and helping to plan the wedding day. This concept began with the collaboration of a female person, a family member, a friend or neighbor in charge of organizing the wedding party, decorate the place of the ceremony, manage the list of guests and sometimes making even the wedding dress, never expecting to receive any compensation for their help in wedding planning. However weddings have changed over the past 30 years. Until then, for example, it was determined that the bride's parents would pay for their wedding. The end of World War II showed the start of the great American weddings in public places. Before that, the marriages were relatively small in private small spaces. Then in 1981 the world stopped to see the wedding of the weddings between Prince Charles and the then Lady Diana Spencer. Watched by millions of people the event triggered the arrival of the modern "big wedding" (Quain, 2016).

Rapidly marriages have become the fairy tales that dreams and bridal magazines are made from. The paper of wedding planner has become more prominent and triggered the beginning of this work as a professional career. Their role can be even more important in the development of wedding tourism, whether from a promotional point of view, informing customers of this option, as well as from an organizational point of view, as to prepare an overseas marriage is required a deeper understanding of existing services in place, and also the legal requirements necessary for the conclusion of it. Many resorts offer destination wedding packages and on-site wedding planners who can help couples create the wedding of their dreams and are becoming increasingly proactive in their wedding business by putting together packages and offering more services for those seeking wedding services (Terrel, 2012)

Therefore, the planner becomes a key player in this type of events held abroad, due to their experience and track record in preparing and organizing abroad weddings, helping to eliminate the barriers that generate fear in people who choose to hold the wedding in a different destination and providing confidence and trust that the event will run as planned and dreamed. There is a range of services that may include wedding planner (Wikipedia, 2016b):

- Interviewing the couple and the parents to identify their needs;

- Budget preparation;
- Event design and styling;
- Venues scouting;
- Planning detailed checklist (from about a year in advance to a few days after the wedding);
- Attendee list preparation;
- Identification of event venues (hotels, wedding manor etc.);
- Identifying and hiring of wedding professionals and service providers (caterers, photographers, videographers, beautician, florists, bakers etc.), and preparation and execution of contracts;
- Procurement of customized decorations such as a journey map;
- Coordination of deliveries/services on the wedding day;
- Have a back-up plan in the event of a disaster;
- Manages the schedule, often with software;
- Assist and prepare legal documentation and translations - especially for destination weddings;
- Make sure your own documentation is current, such as passports or insurance;
- Establish contact with any outside services you will be using.

Therefore wedding planner become more and more a key player by either the importance in the management of the tasks associated with this type of event as also by the stress removed from the couple in the preparation of every detail, ensuring the realization of the wedding celebration according to the tastes thereof.

1.7.WEDDING TOURIST PROFILE

Charting the wedding tourist profile is something important not only for the advertising creation and diffusion of tourism market, as well as for the development of the conditions necessary to meet the needs and expectations of this type of tourist at the destination.

By recognizing and targeting the factors influencing tourist travel decisions, tourists that are likely to fit well with the goals and objectives for particular destination areas may be attracted and the costs of mitigating the negative effects of tourist development can be reduced or avoided (Wall and Mathieson, 2006). Couples that travel abroad to celebrate their marriage, are looking for fairytale weddings and unforgettable memories. They spend an exorbitant amount of time imagining, planning, and booking their dream experiences, researching options across a variety of platforms. Brides typically browse wedding magazines, websites, and trade shows in addition to social-sharing websites and destination-specific websites before deciding on a destination.

Nowadays, many couples opt to skip traditional (and sometimes expensive) weddings in favor of a more intimate gathering at a destination they love. Destination weddings allow couples to extend their celebration from four hours to a couple of days, while creating a lifetime of memories with their close friends and family. Because they are often more intimate than traditional weddings, destination weddings can also be more affordable for couples (Destination Weddings, 2016). Simplicity is also an important aspect for those looking for these wedding destinations because they can be so much simpler to plan and execute than close to home weddings.

This may seem counterintuitive, since it can be very difficult to orchestrate an event long distance, but it actually is easier to plan a wedding at a distant destination. The reason it is simpler is that many destinations have pre-designed wedding packages that are created by professional wedding planners. The packages include all of the components a beautiful wedding requires, and the bride and groom need only make a few decisions and the rest is taken care of for them. If the couple wants to create their own wedding design, they can obtain the assistance of professional wedding planners who are located at the desired destination, and they can take care of all the little details that need attention (BrideBox Wedding Albums, 2014).

According with Bride Box Wedding Albums (2014), another important point that helps defining this type of tourists and economic field is the fact that destination

weddings are typically less expensive than local weddings. The couple pays for their resort stay and the wedding package or their unique design, and the guests pay their own way to the location and their accommodations. Couples can have a large or small wedding and control their spending. They also may get discounts and deals from the resorts when they extend their stay, book a certain number of rooms and arrange their honeymoon at the same venue. Comfort and relaxation are the other features that characterize the wedding tourist, as wedding is stressful and often family and friends can create drama and confusion for the couple. Having a destination wedding eliminates a great deal of stress since the wedding is far away and only a limited number of people can attend. Also, enjoying the convenience of a wedding package that includes everything the couple needs allows them to enjoy the day and relax. They still have a few details to take care of, but overall, the people at the resort do all the heavy lifting when it comes to planning the wedding (BrideBox Wedding Albums, 2014).

1.8.PORTUGAL AS A WEDDING DESTINATION

Wedding destinations are implicitly related to the natural conditions that they have and offer. As noted earlier, there are a variety of facts affecting destination choice, with aspects of nature and scenery being the most influential (Kim & Agrusa, 2005). Typically destinations that have warm weather and beaches are the most popular and sought, because they guarantee great natural conditions, allowing the stay of customers for the celebration of honeymoon that follows after the wedding.

In this context and going following to one of the main themes of this study, Portugal is an attractive destination to participate in this market because it has many of the characteristics required by the main customers of this type of events held at the destination. The fact that climate being milder in north and hot in the center and south of the country, especially in summer, as well as all its west coast is situated in the Atlantic Ocean gives unique natural conditions with which not all countries are able to compete. It is also an important tourist destination in Europe, being sought mainly to relax, through its beaches but also for its historical past and culture. It also presents great natural diversity, being the north and center more mountainous and the south flatter.

However, as mentioned earlier, there are other conditions that become decisive in the choice of destination. The legal requirements for holding the wedding destination is one of them and being the legalization and process to obtain the requirements, factors

capable of halting the choice of a destination. In this field the Portuguese legislation approves the celebration of foreign marriages in the country, as well as marriages of the same sex (Institute of Registries and Notaries, 2010). This is a factor that shows a high importance, because not all countries show the same openness to this type of event by foreign citizens, such as Spain and France that have very strict residential, medical and administration requirements that add complication to planning a destination wedding (Major, McLeay & Waine, 2010).

Another crucial point is the cost. Portugal when compared with the rest of the European Union presents in general a lower price level compared to the other countries, which makes it more attractive in terms of tourism in the European market and also, in this case, in the celebration of events, with the contribution of high frequency flights low cost comparing to other attractive wedding destinations such as Mexico, Mauritius Islands or the Maldives that usually are more expensive. However, a deeper analysis is needed to do to measure the perspectives of Portugal in this market as well as to anticipate the demand for it by the wedding tourists. According to this aspect was selected the Russian market as a way to analyze the interest in the tourism sector and in order to analyze and trace the evolution of the market at present and for the future.

1.9.SUMMARY

Marriage is a unique and special event in the life of two people who want to show in front of all their commitment. The way it is celebrated has evolved over the time and continues to be presented as the recognition of the couple's marriage, but celebrated in different styles and destinations than was traditional before. Wedding destination emergence is strictly linked with the honeymoon, since both events can be complemented or taken in the same place. This trend has changed the motivations and behaviors of consumption in this type of event, becoming essential to study and understand the reason behind to exploit the full potential of this market. The study of these variables will be decisive for the development of products and strategies to promote the development of this market, as well as help to define the profile of the tourist of this market. Wedding Planners are also an important player on this field which contribute and stimulate the development of this market with their experience and knowledge.

The perception of opportunities and challenges are points that should not be overlooked in the development of this market, since it can have a high impact on the

destination economy, creating jobs, services and the giving dynamic on the host destination. The choice of Portugal as object of study and its role in destination weddings aims to respond to the lack information available on this subject, giving special emphasis to the Russian market, which has increased its celebration across borders, specifically in Portugal. Through the study of a wedding celebration company for the Russian market, is pretended to trace the evolution and future trend of Portugal in this market segment.

METHODOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the model used to gather the information about the wedding tourism held in Portugal and the reasons of the choice of this model. Through this model it is pretended to find evidences and explanations to the results obtained. The model will be fed by more than one source in order to get a more reliable and general result and contributing to a realistic analysis of the subject studied. Scientific methods were used: analysis, classification, participation in observation, collection and systematization of information; as well as methods of data processing, in particular, mathematical methods, questionnaire, which will help to organize the facts by means of tables and figures.

2.2 ANALYSIS MODEL

This analysis model was chosen to provide the data required for the study of wedding tourism in Portugal. Based on this, it is essential to first refer to what type of problematic should the analysis model be applied.

The central problem of this research is to characterize the Russian clients who desire an unusual wedding abroad. Starting from that point, the model was created to find the answer to the next questions:

- a) What motivates Russian clients to have a wedding in Portugal?
- b) Which perspectives have a Russian based wedding agency in Portugal?

For two different types of questions, the first based on qualitative factors and abstract (motivation) and the second question in quantitative aspects, aiming to map out future prospects through statistics and quantitative data, different methodologies approaches have to be applied to obtain relevant information.

In this way, to the question "What motivates Russian clients to have a wedding in Portugal?" was selected the Methodology based in Literature review and Methodology based in Questionnaire and Feedback because the obtained data will be analyzed taking into account the opinion of experts and actors of this study subject.

2.2.1 METHODOLOGY BASED ON LITERATURE REVIEW

This method was chosen as a way to understand the personal and social motivations that influence decision of marry in another country. Since it is a qualitative analysis and not statistics, the method chosen to respond is based on research of information in the existing literature related to the topic of the question, in order to highlight the approach, the ideas and conclusions that experts and scholars on this subject arrived. The studied literature used was mostly from the last 20 years in the context of tourist motivation and behavior on international and domestic markets related with weddings. However, economic and political context currently lived was also researched and analyzed since it is important to understand its impact on the motivation of people, and find out if the change in demand for wedding tourism is related to the economic context that a society lives. Thus it will also review the external factors (economic, political and social) influencing the decision to hold a wedding abroad.

2.2.2 METHODOLOGY BASED ON PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

Participant Observation is the model used in this methodology, once it is described as a qualitative research method in which the researcher not only observes the research participants, but also actively engages in the activities of the research participants. This requires the researcher to become integrated into the participants' environment while also taking objective notes about what is going on. Most researchers who conduct participant observations take on the role that they are interested in studying (Williams, 2016).

During the Internship in "StudioVictorias" were created the Questionnaire and Feedback as tools to understand client's preferences and service evaluation. The Questionnaire was distributed to clients personally before the preparation of the

wedding in the year of 2015. Bride and groom have their own Questionnaire to answer. The Questionnaires have open questions in order to give the client the opportunity to answer in detail, which is important information to be used in the preparation and organization of wedding but not so comfortable to analyze different answers from different clients with different experiences and preferences to construct a unique sample of analysis. The Questionnaire consists in 29 questions, where 5 of them are related to the wedding video for couple. The Questionnaire was done in native language of client, Russian language (ANNEX 7).

Through the preparation of Questionnaires and request for Feedbacks related on the subject at hand, I intend to analyze the reasons that led to the decision of celebrating this event in a foreign destination by couples. Both tools contribute to a deeper and direct analysis of the matter in question, where the protagonists opinion in study (couples) is qualitative and directed to the topic in question, being used in the form of Questionnaire. The Feedback from them about the service is also important as it may be an important means of trust and influence to show for a possible client.

With regard to the second question "Which perspectives have a Russian based wedding agency in Portugal?" were chosen the Methodology based on a Case Study "StudioVictorias" and the Methodology based on Secondary Data. These methodologies provide numerical and statistical data necessary to analyze the evolution of the subject under study, helping to realize the impact of possible events and their consequences over the analysis period as help to prospect future trends.

2.2.3 METHODOLOGY BASED ON A CASE STUDY

"STUDIOVICTORIAS"

This method aims to collect information based on an agent that has an impact and works directly with the subject of study, based on statistical and quantitative data from the agent to provide a basis for the issue under review.

Through analysis of a company in this field of study, from the Internship made within the same, is intended to analyze the evolution of marriages celebrated by foreigners in Portugal, the types of promotion and advertising done by the company internally and externally, the review of costs and expenses of this type of event and its breakdown by item, and analyze the competition itself, helping to sort the situation where the market is (expanding, consolidated or saturated).

2.2.4 METHODOLOGY BASED ON SECONDARY DATA

This methodology was used with the support of quantitative research in order to get a data basis to study the problem approached. According to Wyse (2011) Quantitative Research is used to quantify the problem by way of generating numerical data or data that can be transformed into useable statistics. It is used to quantify attitudes, opinions, behaviors, and other defined variables – and generalize results from a larger sample population. Quantitative Research uses measurable data to formulate facts and uncover patterns in research. Quantitative data collection methods are much more structured than Qualitative data collection methods. Quantitative data collection methods include various forms of surveys – online surveys, paper surveys, mobile surveys and kiosk surveys, face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews, longitudinal studies, website interceptors, online polls, and systematic observations.

According to that, it was used secondary data from "Svadba-Tour" and "Statistic of Tourism Government of Russia" relevant to the question under study. This method allow to use the information of this institutional sources to provide a large and seasonal type of information, making possible the analysis of data evolution and allowing to trace scenarios that help test and validate hypotheses drawn from not concrete facts, as ideas and assumptions. Analysis of these data will be important in a way that statistical analysis can prospect future developments related to the topic under study.

INTERNSHIP

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter approach Russian tourism market and the unstable economic situation in Russia, which affects the exchange rate and the income from their citizens causing impact on the outbound tourism from Russian tourists to Europe. In this chapter I will describe the wedding agency “StudioVictorias” and my duties, the process of organization of weddings will be discussed and some feedback from the couples will be given at the end of this chapter.

3.2 ANALYSIS OF RUSSIAN MARKET

A study on the impact of the global economic crisis on the tourism industry can be divided into two categories. Articles of the first group describe and analyze the changes that have occurred in the tourism industry, for example, articles of D.G Pearce (2012). The second group of studies offers specific recommendations for companies operating in the industry, to overcome the negative effects of economic change. It is possible to find it in work of G. Khairat and Maher (2012).

Also, the first research group includes work A. Papatheodorou, J. Rossello and Xiao (2010). With the help of documentation and financial reporting analysis, the authors describe the effect of the economic downturn on the tourism industry. According to forecasts of the authors, in a crisis, tourists will travel to give preference to short distances in order to reduce logistics costs. This phenomenon has received the name – «staycation». Furthermore, according to the authors' estimates, domestic tourism will grow, and such areas recreation, visiting friends and relatives, as also independent travels will grow, while sales volume in the areas of international tourism as a long journey and trips to countries with an unstable exchange rate will decline. Throughout 2014-2015 Russian tourist industry suffered a new wave of the crisis: the unstable political and economic situation has led to the bankruptcy of 16 tour operators. Russian tourism market is saturated, there is no monopoly, companies are fighting for customers, lowering prices and as a result every year has negative financial results. Moreover, the percentage of tourists who prefer to organize their own leisure, without the help of intermediaries, is growing every year, seems that in 2020 the demand for the services of tour operators will drop so much that will make this industry absolutely unattractive to work on it. Unexpected political crisis, a significant depreciation of the domestic currency, changes in laws and economic sanctions have created new problems

and challenges for the tourism industry, which is already working under difficult conditions in recent years. Since the problem has been increasing in Russia relatively recently, it still been not fully explored. Despite the fact the issue of managing a tour operator, including in times of crisis has been analyzed in many studies, not all of them have experienced and predicted the current crisis of the tourism industry in Russia, which leads to the relevance of this work.

Mass outbound tourism in Russia appeared relatively recently, 20 years ago in connection with the termination of the policy of "iron curtain" (Sharypova, 2014). For the Russian tourism industry 2014-2015 were more difficult than during the global economic crisis. During a period of two months of 2015 (middle of July – middle of September) 16 tour operators were bankrupted, and, according to experts, affected about 150 thousand Russians.

So, Mikhaylov (2014), analyst at «The New Times» identifies the following possible causes of the crisis in the industry:

- The weakness of the ruble;
- Citizens fear to not obtain a visa;
- Tourist concerns about the unfriendly attitude of the host side (Europe).

Another researcher, Zhukov (2014), not only articulates the causes of the crisis in the industry, but also arranges them hierarchically descending them in order of importance:

- Depreciation of the national currency, which resulted in an increase of the tourist product cost;
- Economic recession of Russia and of citizen conditions;
- Fear of citizen about travel agencies and their trust in the tourism industry;
- Tourists start to plan their holidays independently;
- Incorrect plan of sales by tour operators.

Other authors, like Ovcharov, approach this tendency in a more financially-based research, coming with the following list of determinants of tourist industry crisis:

- Wrong management decisions;
- Weak risk control;
- Changing attitudes towards the European Union due to political sanctions;
- Lack of funds for tourism (the rising of cost of tourism products to 25% in combination with a reduction in real citizen's incomes by 30%);
- Low profitability of the tourism sector;

- Weak legal framework;
- Low requirements of financial support;
- Low level of responsibility of tourist operators (Ovcharov, 2014).

Summarizing all the above factors of crisis in the tourism industry experts, for a better understanding, represented them as a series of integrated groups (Figure 1):

Figure 1. Factors of crisis in the tourism industry



Source: Adapted by the Author

Macroenvironment for tourist operators in Russia in 2015 was not favorable – decline in demand, reduced consumer behavior, high saturation of the market, the power of suppliers dictate the rules – all these and other factors make the tourism industry in Russia unattractive for new entrants and difficult to conduct the activities of the companies operating in it.

3.3. NUMBER OF RUSSIAN TOURISTS WHO VISIT PORTUGAL

Data of outbound tourism provided by The Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation (2016) where I could find data of 2012, 2013, 2014 and in fact first half of 2015 (ANNEX 1, ANNEX 2, ANNEX 3, ANNEX 4 - “TOP 50 countries visited by Russians tourists”).

Table 1. Total number of outbound tourism in 2012 is 15.129.156 tourists.

2012			
Position	Country	Tourists	%
1	TURKEY	2.516.136	16,63%
2	EGYPT	1.906.637	12,60%
3	CHINA	1.328.850	8,78%
44	PORTUGAL	29.902	0,20%

Source: Adapted from The Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation (2016)

Table 2. Total number of outbound tourism in 2013 is 18.069.572 tourists.

2013			
Position	Country	Tourists	%
1	TURKEY	3.078.563	17,04%
2	EGYPT	1.909.240	10,57%
3	GREECE	1.175.629	6,51%
47	PORTUGAL	29.691	0,16%

Source: Adapted from The Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation (2016)

Table 3. Total number of outbound tourism in 2014 is 17.403.433 tourists.

2014			
Position	Country	Tourists	%
1	TURKEY	3.278.405	18,84%
2	EGYPT	2.565.726	14,74%
3	GREECE	1.016.083	5,84%
46	PORTUGAL	31.223	0,18%

Source: Adapted from The Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation (2016)

Table 4. Total number of outbound tourism in 2015 is 5.427.738 tourists.

2015 (6 months)			
Position	Country	Tourists	%
1	EGYPT	1.054.569	19,43%
2	TURKEY	1.031.525	19,00%
3	GERMANY	284.209	5,24%
48	PORTUGAL	8.900	0,16%

Source: Adapted from The Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation (2016)

As we can see on tables visiting Portugal by Russian-speaking, tourists has been relatively stable for three years 2012-2014, but due to the fact of the economic crisis and the fall of the Ruble against the Euro currency it started to be a decrease of the number

of Russian tourists that visit European countries in 2015. However, the annual figure of 2015 is not yet final, because the data provided by the Federal State Statistics Service of Russia (2016) is for the first 6 months of the reporting period. It is expected that by the end of the year this number will be the weakest of the last 4 years, but behind the crisis the interest to visit Portugal has been increasing year by year.

3.4. ORGANIZATION OF WEDDING PROCESS

Wedding as a business is very promising and at the same time new in model business. Organizing a wedding starts to be a work of experts, that is, people with high skills, which understand what each customer wants, taking into account all their wishes, and turning the wedding into a celebration that is remembered for a lifetime, not only by married couples, but also for all the guests present.

Organizing a wedding is a very difficult process so couples are turning to specialized agencies for weddings. The agency itself will arrange everything you need for your wedding, taking into account the direct wishes of customers, and preparing some surprises for them. The staff of wedding services are people with high skills, who know not only all the specialty shops and restaurants, but also understand the client, taking into account all its desires and whims. Special attention is required to develop and implement wedding ceremonies as the organization of such an event is a very serious matter. Wedding agencies offer a full list of wedding services, including selection of shops for clothing honeymooners, bachelor parties, the organization of the wedding and excursions as well as the selection of artists or dance groups for entertainment purposes. It can also supervise the decoration style being responsible for accessories such as artificial flowers, candles, drapes of fabric. Given the desire of honeymooners, wedding agency workers can help select the tissue for individual tailoring of dresses for the bride and a suit for the groom. Select shoes, accessories, make-up, hairstyle and manicure. In addition, the appropriate style can be selected for the bridesmaids and groomsmen, parents and witnesses. This also should include the choice of a wedding bouquet and boutonnieres, bouquets for bridesmaids and other floral accessories. The coordination with the advertising company that produces invitations and business cards is another of the services provided.

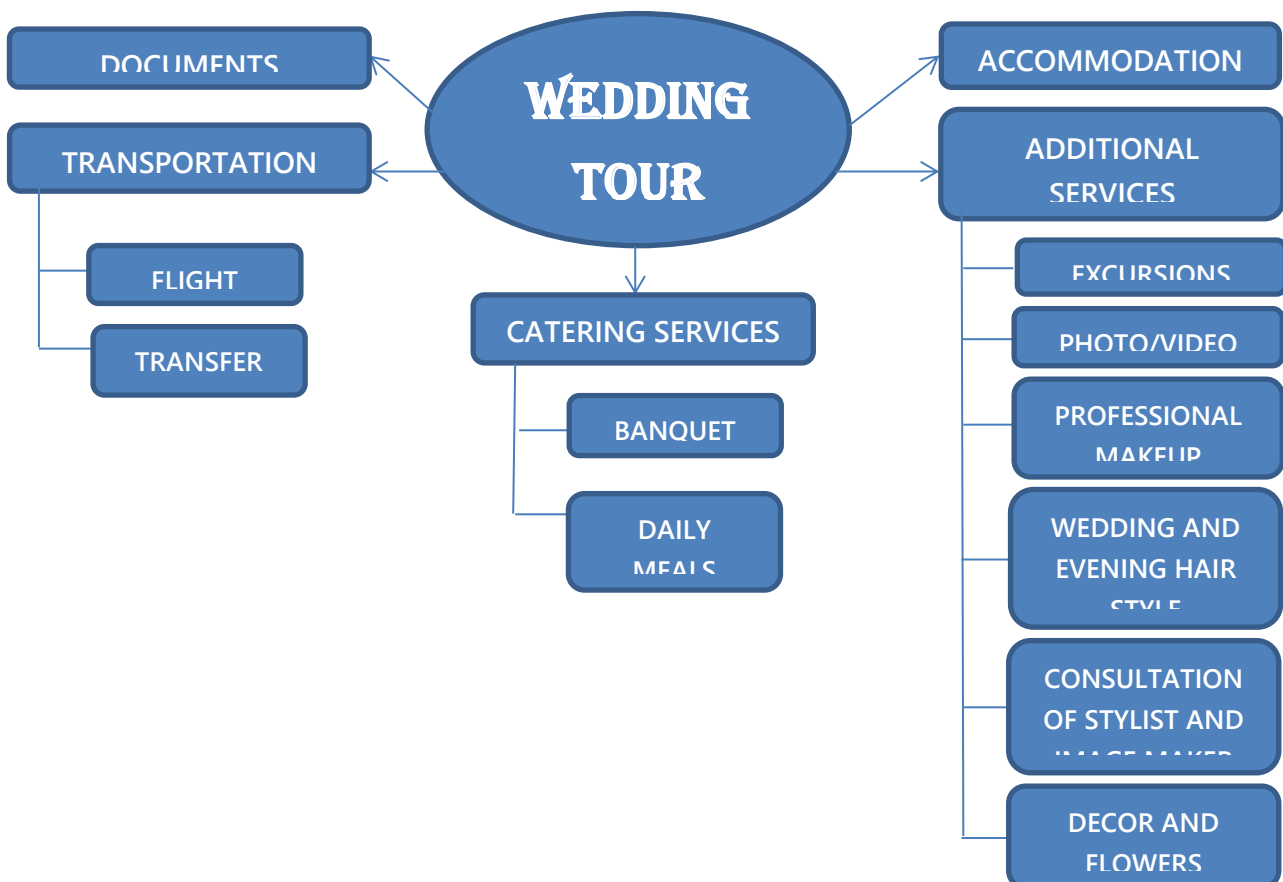
In accordance with the wishes of the customer, the wedding agency negotiates and coordinates their work completely. From the newlyweds it only needed the guest list.

Wedding agency provide also transportation services. Regarding customer's request and the style of the event, the agency helps to determine the appropriate vehicles: Limousines, cars, minivans.

The agency assumes responsibility for the organization of video and photography celebration. Subsequently, it is also the agency that coordinates the timely and proper execution of the services of photographers and videographers on the creation and design of a wedding album and film.

Below is a model Figure 2 of the wedding tour, which clearly presents the constituent components. Typically, wedding tour is a comprehensive program that combines a variety of services. Services may vary, depending on the scale of the upcoming wedding and honeymooners preferences.

Figure 2. The organizations of wedding tour



Source: Adapted by the Author

At the organization and preparation of the wedding ceremony manager should consider the following moments:

- Place of travel;
- Kind of tour (beach, sightseeing, extreme and so on.);
- Holiday atmosphere (intimate tour for two or a crowded, noisy and funny);
- The theme of the ceremony (according with client's preferences);
- The number of days of the tour;
- The budget of the newlyweds;
- The season when the tour is carried out;
- Age of the tourists.

From all of these factors depends the choice of the city, hotel, the cost of travel and leisure activities.

3.4.1 TRANSPORTATION

When organizing a wedding tour is it necessary to take care of the transport accessibility of the venue. If the final destination is a paradise island, other countries and continents is it necessary the book the flight and the individual transfer airport-hotel-airport. It is necessary to think of all the details of the celebration ahead, including transfer for guests and newlyweds to the place of marriage registration / ceremony and banquet to the venue. A variety of wedding transport is amazing, and can satisfy even the most discerning honeymooners. Here are a few options from a fairly impressive list: limousines, executive class cars, classic cars, boats, etc. For example, Russian speaking clients usually prefer classic cars and limousines for their weddings.

3.4.2 CATERING SERVICES

Catering services for the wedding ceremony are traditionally a great wedding banquet or dinner, or even the both (according to the budget and preferences of the couple). Wedding banquet is settled in accordance with a pre-designed script, which includes the following major components:

- Accounting of the number of guests to reserve the places;
- Planning the location of the banquet participants according to the status (family, friends and children);
- Select tableware;

- Approval of the general and individual menu;
- Development of the repertoire of musicians, taking into account individual wishes of the customer;
- Coordination of the estimated time of the banquet;
- Reservation of additional services: karaoke room, billiard room etc. The requirements for the wedding feast differ between weddings; there are couples who take great pleasure doing a romantic picnic on the beach or a fun meal with family and friends. For Russian speaking clients, Portuguese traditional restaurant with seafood menu is the priority choice to celebrate their wedding.

3.4.3 ACCOMMODATION

Choosing a hotel for the honeymoon, or taking care of all guest's rooms, are important aspects in the planning of the wedding program. The interior, the location of the hotel, additional services, and check-in/out time - all this must be considered. To create the perfect atmosphere in the room of the newlyweds should be paid attention to the interior decoration and design, which can emphasize the solemnity of the moment and create an appropriate ambiance and mood. For example, a room can be decorated with rose petals, floral arrangement, bed arranged with beautifully draped fabrics and decorated with a canopy. Lighting is particularly important, to a mandatory attribute Bridal Suite will spark - in the bedroom, bathroom, and living room. Many hotels are coming up with all sorts of additional surprises to please and surprise the newlyweds. Another very important point is the location of the room. For example, if it is next to the lobby, couples will be uncomfortable because of the noise. The same may happen if the windows overlook the pool. Arriving at the hotel and see the room in advance is perfect, but, unfortunately, the newlyweds do not always have that opportunity. But in any case we should not forget that comfortable accommodation is an important attribute for a period of honeymoon or romantic getaway.

The list of of accommodation which prefer our clients:

- Hotel Vila Gale de Cascais (Cascais);
- Farol Design Hotel (Cascais);
- Fortaleza Guincho (Guincho);
- Pestana Cascais Ocean & Conference Hotel (Cascais);
- SANA Estoril hotel (Estoril);
- Hotel Quinta da Marinha Resort (Cascais).

3.4.4 ADDITIONAL SERVICES: EXCURSIONS

Development and organization of a wedding ceremony includes the provision of basic, additional and related services that make technology of tourist service. The main services include - transportation services, catering and accommodation, preparation of documents. Additional services include - photo and video, music, entertainment, hairdresser and makeup stylist, excursions and more. In this point as my internship functions in agency were personal assistance and tourist guide I would like to describe better the excursions provided by the agency to the newlyweds and their guests. The organization of excursion programs needs the following:

- Price range of excursions;
- The booking of excursions;
- Responsibility for the failure of both sides;
- Services offered.

In Portugal there are particularly interesting excursions. There are 15 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, which include Sintra, Belem Tower, and Jeronimos Monastery in Lisbon, the historic center of Porto, the University of Coimbra and many others. For a beach holiday the most suited southern region of the Algarve, where the bathing season lasts from July to September are a perfect choice. Guests can relax in the center of Lisbon. An example of excursion program for the newlyweds and their guests is round trip to Sintra and Cabo da Roca. Sintra not only plunge into the Middle Ages, as well as make unusual images in the city and in the most extreme western point of the continent. Thus, this tour gives not just an opportunity to relax in nature or to visit Sintra, but also relive certain emotions, to feel the atmosphere of the medieval city and its habitants bringing unforgettable pictures. Another option is to drive along the "Lisbon Riviera" - so called Atlantic coast near Lisbon towards the beautiful town of Cascais.

Table 5. Price ranges of additional services

PRICE RANGES OF ADDITIONAL SERVICES	
Excursions in and around Lisbon	45 - 200€
Photo/video	350 - 1500€
Professional makeup + wedding and evening hair style	150 - 300€
Consultation of stylist and image maker	Online - from 50€; accompaniment in the bridal salon – from 100€
Décor and flowers	100 - 1000€

Source: Adapted by the Author

3.5. WEDDING AGENCY “STUDIOVICTORIAS”

The place of my internship was in the wedding agency "StudioVictorias" which is a subject of my study. During 3 months I was working there as a tourist guide and personal assistant.

I chose this agency as the “wedding tourism” theme is interesting to me. Since I worked as a guide in Lisbon, my work allowed me to meet many people in the area of customer services – photographers, professional shoppers, stylists and wedding planners. Thanks to these new people that I met and their interesting work on this area, I got the opportunity to find “StudioVictorias” as one of the first and successful agencies in Portugal, aimed at the Russian-speaking audience. Inside there I decided the topic of my Internship, with the help of owner and wedding planner Viktoriia Ignateva.

“StudioVictorias” was created in 2012 with the purpose of planning and organizing weddings in Portugal for Russian speakers. The agency is composed until now by three members: the owner, a wedding planner and a coordinator. Planning and organizing a wedding involves several responsibilities, as book the ceremony place, handle the legal procedure with the Civil Registry Office, manage and contract the services included in a wedding, as per customer needs, a photographer, video maker, entertainment, decorator, makeup and hair stylist, as also the catering services, just to mention some of them. Another huge factor is the advertisement, which is the key in this type of business and has to be done and promoted to reach the target market – couples.

My duties were to help the wedding planner in preparation for the wedding and during the wedding day, and contact also with non-Russian speaking clients, being the link between clients and the agency. Other part of my duties was to conduct tours for couples and their wedding guests in Lisbon for half day.

Being “StudioVictorias” an agency directly linked to weddings abroad, I thought interesting not only to understand the reasons behind this decision, but also to analyze the wedding tourism and its development in Portugal.

The agency highlighted the price list on their official website: “We use the policy of fixed prices for our services. At this stage it seems to us the only right decision, when you immediately know how much you will have to pay, and at the same time be assured that the quality and quantity of services will not affect the final price”.

In order to stimulate customers wedding agency "StudioVictorias" offers different price range for different types of weddings. The company offers discounts on

wedding for early booking and a free boutonniere Bridesmaid or a gift of 4 hours tour in Lisbon during their vacation.

Table 6. The price list for weddings by agency “StudioVictorias”

Number of persons	Price €
Until 10	770
11-30	990
31-60	1300
61-120	1750
121 and more	2100

Source: Wedding agency “StudioVictorias”(2015)

To minimize the risks, wedding agency receives prepayment, to begin to organize a wedding and to pay to contractors (photographer, stylist, florist, etc.). If there is a prepayment, a contract is drawn up between the agency and the client for the provision of wedding services, detailing signs the budget and the number of services provided. The prepayment amount depends on the type of wedding, selected services and the number of guests which may vary from 40% to 70% of the total cost of wedding. For example, for the services of a photographer takes an advance of 35% for the whole day from a large amount and 50% of a small amount of 4 hours shooting. Also, pre-leased restaurant, menu, and decoration for the wedding.

In addition, the agency has three wedding package offers, designed specifically for weddings for couple in Portugal (ANNEX 5).

Silver wedding pack 1290€ includes:

- Personal assistant for the wedding day and preparation;
- Wedding venue;
- Wedding ceremony decoration (simple);
- Sparkling wine for celebration;
- Transfer for couple (4-5 hours);
- Ceremony celebrant.

Gold wedding pack 1990€ includes:

- Personal assistant for the wedding day and preparation;
- Wedding venue;
- Wedding ceremony decoration (simple);
- Sparkling wine for celebration;
- Transfer for couple (4-5 hours);

- Ceremony celebrant;
- Stylist (hair&make-up);
- Photographer (4-5 hours).

Platinum wedding pack 2990€ includes:

- Personal assistant for the wedding day and preparation;
- Wedding venue (including some palaces);
- Wedding ceremony decoration;
- Sparkling wine for celebration;
- Transfer for couple (4-5 hours);
- Ceremony celebrant;
- Stylist (hair & make-up);
- Photographer (4-5 hours);
- Videographer (4-5 hours).

If clients have some doubts about the agency and the quality of provided services they can read the feedback from the couples on the official website of “StudioVictorias” <http://studiovictorias.com>. Here follows some examples I translated from Russian language:

Norman and Marina: *“We are very grateful to all the team members for services rendered. Everyone was professional and we felt that all worked from the heart. It is more than “just business.”* Wedding in Algarve, Portugal-2015

Maria and Sergio: *“I was engaged under the leadership of Victoria. It embodies my dreams, including the dress of flowers. Wedding decorations, bouquet, everything was just amazing and harmonious! Happy and satisfied with her work completely. In addition to being a great organizer of Victoria with a lot of experience, she is still a wonderful and sensitive person! Thank you very much for all Victoria Studio Victorias team!”* Wedding in Lisbon, 2016.

Sergey and Eugenia: *“Thank you very much for that all have brought to the end!!! Thank you for our wedding, thank you for the sun in the day (not just on the street, but also in our hearts), thank you for unforgettable moments, thanks for the lovely restaurant (the first time we dined on a cloud !!!), thank you for the beautiful photos . Good luck to you!”* . Wedding in Madeira, 2016.

Anna and Alexander: *“Thank you for helping to my future husband to arrange a super surprise for me! Everything was wonderful! From the beginning, I was struck by makeup - it was very nice and professional! Photographer Milan is very nice, usually I am a shy person with no experience of photo shoots, it was difficult to be relaxed, but with Milan I felt relaxed. And the pictures are amazing, above all my expectations! Stunning photos in the most beautiful city! Thank you and success to you and your team!”* Wedding in Lisbon, 2016.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyzes data relating to the choice of Russian speaking clients to have a wedding in Portugal, as well as the macro and micro environments of the wedding agency “StudioVictorias” and its main competitors, analyzing primary and secondary information about the agency, questionnaire done by the agency and identifying the strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats by SWOT analysis. General recommendations will be the end part of this chapter as a way to provide a vision for a successful business development and customer acquisition.

4.2. REASONS WHY RUSSIAN CLIENTS CHOOSE A WEDDING IN PORTUGAL

Despite the tourism has cooled down due to the global crisis around the world, there are segments of tourism that grow even in this scenario. Wedding destinations is a segment of tourism where the growth continues even with in a crisis scenario revealing a huge potential in future. To study this tendency will be analyzed the wedding tourism by Russians who choose Portugal as a destination to marry. Portugal is an exotic country for Russian speaking clients. Exotic is what come from a faraway country. That looks different, unusual, exciting and somewhat mysterious. Portugal is a country with a rich history, beautiful resorts, and a variety of medieval towns and magnificent scenery of olive groves, vineyards and fields of wheat. Portugal is distinctive and unusual, it is not like any other European country, and for the newlyweds from the post-Soviet space, it is an exotic country. Portuguese extremely tasty cuisine is famous especially for seafood lovers and meat dishes and Portuguese wine, where particular attention should be paid to the green wine, which has no counterpart in any other country in the world. The country is annually visited by about 18 million tourists (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2016). Such a large number of tourists is provided by public investment in the tourist industry, the country has some of the most comfortable beaches in Europe, hotels in Portugal are able to satisfy the most demanding travelers and the whole country is an open-air museum - almost every town has ancient monasteries, churches, castles and fortresses, which were built during the long history of Portugal. The rich history is reflected in the monuments of architecture, made in a unique style. Traveling around the country, staying in a cozy hotel in Portugal, travelers invariably encounter a

piece of the past, whether it be an unusual form of the buildings of the old castle, stone cathedrals with luxurious gilded architectural details or classically elegant palaces.

Portugal has a variety of regions that can provide a diversity of possibilities from activities and scenarios that newlyweds are interested. It has to offer a wealth of beautiful places for wedding ceremonies, for every taste and budget. Fantasy can be reality because there are so many places people can use: rent a beach, climb the rock, have a wedding in a beautiful villa (some villas have also a nightclub and its church inside of the complex) or in an old mansion.

According to Eurostat³ we can divide Portugal by 7 regions, based on NUTS⁴ II (North, Centre, Lisbon, Alentejo, Algarve, Madeira and Azores). Our agency already provided weddings in 6 regions: North, Centre, Lisbon, Alentejo, Algarve and Madeira, which will be described below as we recommend it for our clients.

Lisbon is a legendary city with a history spanning more than twenty centuries. Lisbon coast stretches from the wide mouth of the river Tagus to the beaches of Alentejo, from the modern megalopolis to the picturesque fishing villages. Neighborhoods of Lisbon are famous for its magnificent beaches, golf courses and casinos. . There is also a variety of romantic and beautiful places, such as the Palácio dos Marqueses de Fronteira or Palácio Nacional de Queluz which will provide beautiful photos and unforgettable memories during the wedding ceremony. Just a stone's throw from the capital is Sintra - town of fabulous architecture and luxurious landscapes. In Sintra, the newlyweds usually choose the fabulous palaces of Palácio Pena, Quinta da Regaleira, Monserrate and the amazing Cabo da Roca - the westernmost point of Europe

The nature of Portugal has no analogues in Europe:

- North of the country - a dense thicket of woods, lakes, mountains and, of course, endless ocean. If you want a wedding in the style of Snow White (in a thick dark forest of tall trees, through which the sunlight makes its way to the sound of the near ocean), or something even more unusual and fascinating - then you have to go north.

³ Eurostat is an organization located in Luxembourg which main responsibilities are to provide statistical information to the institutions of the European Union and to promote the harmonisation of statistical methods across its member states (Eurostat, 2016).

⁴ NUTS is the acronym of "Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics" division hierarchical system of the territory into regions. It was created to harmonize the statistics from various countries in terms of collection, compilation and dissemination of regional statistics. The nomenclature is divided into three levels (NUTS I, NUTS II, NUTS III), defined according to population, administrative and geographical criteria (Pordata, 2016).

- Algarve has a blue and warm ocean, vast and the best beaches in Europe, eucalyptus forests, cliffs and waterfalls, and luxury resort hotels. Algarve is a Portugal's southernmost province, bordering by the Atlantic Ocean. The coastline has some of the most luxurious beaches in the world stretches for 200 kilometers. It is a popular holiday destination not only for sun lovers, but also for those who are in the midst of winter dreams of color and spring warmth. Tours in Algarve are always in great demand. Resort hotels may please the most exacting tourist, where they have ability to learn and remember the skills of golf water sports: surfing, windsurfing, sailing, pleasure boat, sailing, and more.
- In Alentejo, where the plains give way to rolling hills and the incredible beauty of the lake. Here you can play a wedding right in the olive grove or vineyard in eco-style, so popular with Europeans, or in an old manor by the style "rustic."
- The island of eternal spring of Madeira awaits travelers all year round. This exotic, green oasis in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, where every café has the local fortified wine - Madeira with its landscapes, sunsets and sunrises has always good moments to offer to who want to visit it.

4.3. RESULTS

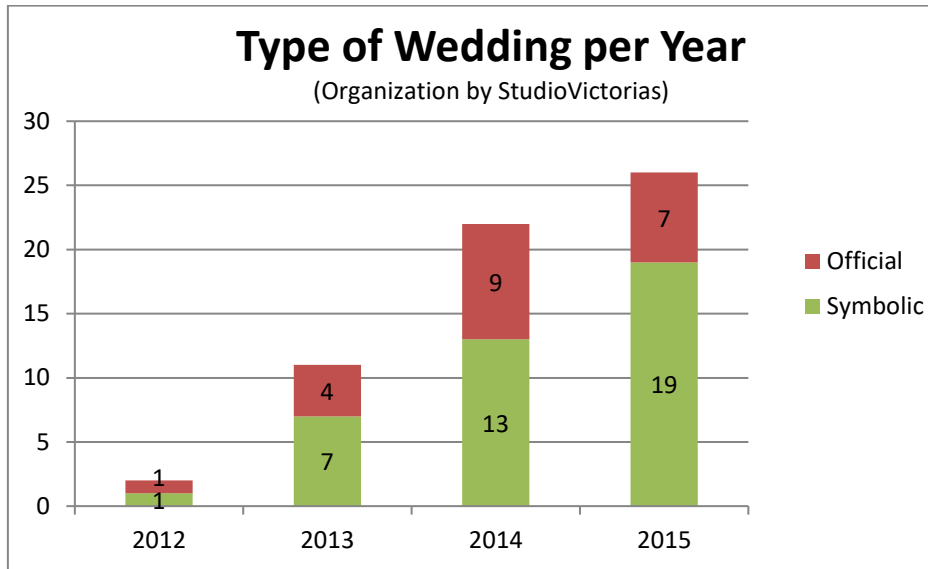
One of the main goals of this research is to measure the contribution of wedding tourism in the global tourism and its perspectives. Finding potential opportunities is an important step to companies in this area to stay competitive and take all the advantages as long as the market is developing.

4.3.1 DATA ANALYSIS

In this part based in a primary data analysis by statistical information of “StudioVictorias” by year (number and type of weddings) is possible to predict the trend and popularization of weddings in Portugal. Weddings abroad are becoming more and more popular.

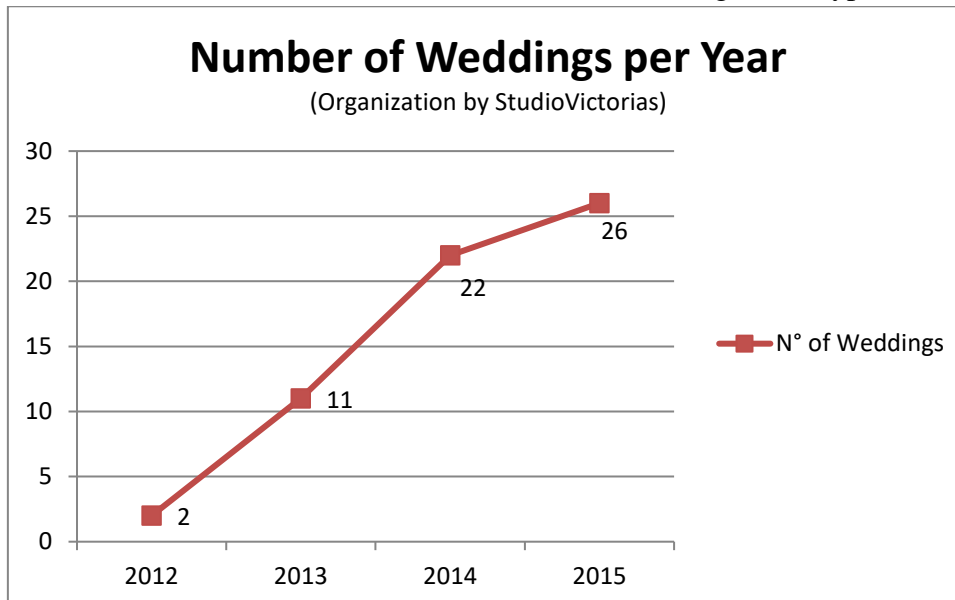
Type of wedding per year: Wedding ceremonies can be divided into formal (official) and informal (symbolic). Official wedding ceremony performed by an authorized person in the local municipality or beyond (Figure 3, Figure 4).

Figure 3. Number of wedding per year



Source: Wedding agency “SutidoVictorias”

Figure 4. Type of wedding per year



Source: Wedding agency “SutidoVictorias”

Most couples often choose symbolic type of ceremony, if they want to mark the anniversary of their wedding or if prefer a beautiful and memorable day for two. The greatest demand in Portugal enjoys the informal registration of marriage as couples preferring to register their relationship in native country, but for a beautiful honeymoon or an informal marriage ceremony they prefer to spend in exotic countries. As we can see by the Figure 4 “Type of wedding per year” the symbolic ceremony is the most chosen from the couples, since it is easier to organize all the documents submitted in their native country (ANNEX 6).

The number of weddings is also affected by such factors as seasonality. During the summer, there is a sharp jump in weddings in Portugal among Russian-speaking customers.

4.3.2 TYPES OF PROMOTION AND ADVERTISEMENT DONE BY THE AGENCY

The wedding planner agency “StudioVictorias” does not have a particularly extensive advertising and promotion. Advertising and promotion is the main weaknesses of the agency, where the company should identify better solutions to reveal and announce its services to the major target possible.

Nevertheless, the agency has its own website, as well as pages on social networks, and periodically advertisement printed in the wedding magazines and blogs.

- Company official website (<http://studiovictorias.com>);
- Social networks (Facebook, Vkontakte, Instagram, Pinterest, youtube.com);
- Weddings magazine “Marry Me”;
- Wedding blogs (<http://thedestinationblog.com/>, <https://weddywood.ru>).

Promotions are providing by traditional methods, the main channel of communication with customers is the official web site <http://studiovictorias.com> and social networks such as Facebook, Vkontakte and Instagram.

Since the weddings by agency are held not only among the Russian-speaking couples, but also mixed couples or between the Portuguese, the site has the option to switch languages by 3 options: English, Russian, and Portuguese, which is very convenient and expands the range of clients. Website analysis provides additional information about our consumers. The official website contains basic information about the services, prices, portfolio from the weddings, photos taken at weddings which were organized by this agency (no plagiarism), providing information about the organizers and workers of the agency, as well as customer feedback and contact details of the agency. At the moment agency has 10 positive feedback from couple since 2013 year.

The main target audience for the project in question is those newlyweds who do not want their wedding to be like any other. They do not want to waste their strength on the preparation of the celebration or in need of assistance in this difficult matter. Note that the level of customer revenue does not matter - the agency will be able to organize any wedding business according to the wishes and budget provided by the wide audience.

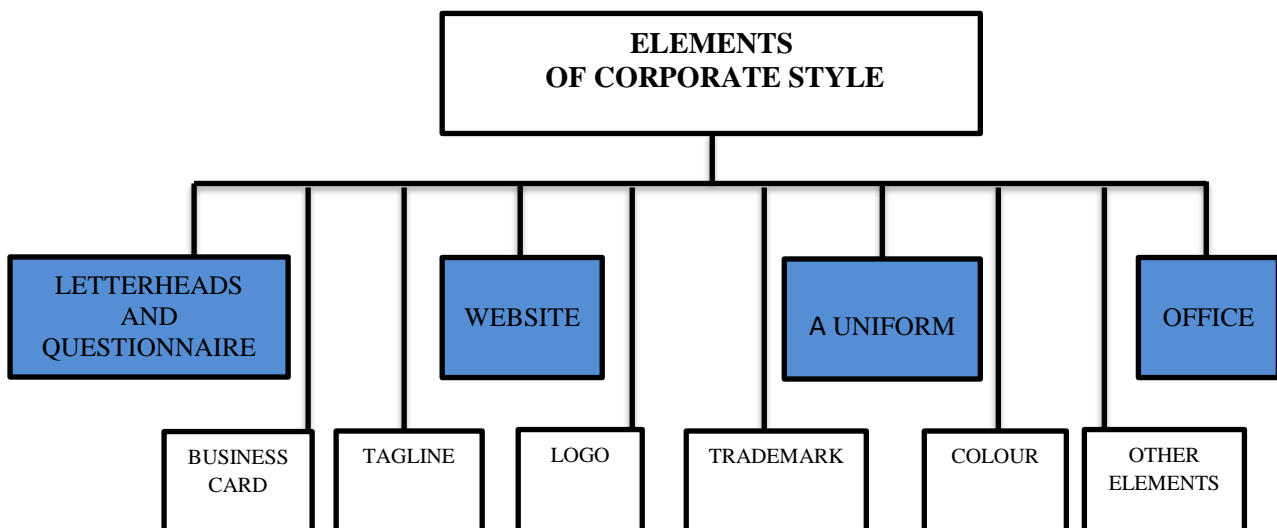
4.3.3 COMPANY STYLE AND IMAGE

A single corporate identity can be a tool to create additional competitive advantages for the wedding agency “StudioVictorias”. The question of corporate’s style of tour operators is considered in works of Savenkova (2014). According to the author, a single corporate identity of the tourist enterprise is one of the most effective tools to improve the competitiveness of enterprises by performing three functions at once:

- Image;
- Identification;
- Differentiating.

Thus, allowing the company to increase awareness, enhance its reputation and create a common perception of all information related to a particular tour operator, which can also be used for the wedding. Elements of corporate style are presented in the Figure 5.

Figure 5. Elements of corporate style



Source: Adapted from Savenkova (2014)

Figure 2 highlighted the elements of corporate identity, which, according to the author, tourism companies pay insufficient attention. As the author notes is rare a tour operator thinking about the practice of special clothing for sales managers who, in turn, can influence the trust of customers, creating the image of a united, serious and responsible organization.

This component of a good image and style is very important and for tourism and for wedding agencies. “StudioVictorias” has business cards developed by the designer and ordered in England. The wedding agency has a constant staff of 3 employees and

variable employees for additional services such as a stylist, a photographer, a hair dresser, etc. The agency needs a single style for employees that will raise awareness and trust among clients, and also will make easier to find a wedding employee by an agency's uniform during a wedding ceremony, if it is necessary. The agency has a special form only for the organizer and coordinator, blouse and long skirt in neutral tones.

After the wedding ceremony agency has feedback regarding the organization of ceremony, if the couple liked or disliked the ceremony they can write a feedback on website for other couples to see that.

4.3.4 COMPETITION

Wedding agency "StudioVictorias" has a number of competitors in Portugal among the Russian-speaking customers. These wedding agencies provide almost the same service for weddings in Portugal as "StudioVictorias". The strongest competitor is Dream Weddings company. Dream Weddings company is the agency that has a similar wedding tours and promotions. The rest of the competitors are start-up companies that do not have an annual turnover of more than 5 weddings. The price range between the competitors are different, however, wedding agency "StudioVictorias" is the most affordable with high quality services:

- Atlantic Empire (1,000€) (provide wedding services as additional);
- Dreams to Remember (1,600€);
- Dream Weddings (1,250€);
- Marry Me Agency (10% of total price of wedding package);
- Lusitana Sol (1,300€) (provide wedding services as additional);
- StudioVictorias (770€);
- Wedding Portugal (800€).

Such number of players on the market (Table 7), combined with the crisis of the industry cause not only tough price competition, but even dumping - selling below the costs. To investigate our competitors and to see if they are good and strong competitors, I asked to some friends of mine who were thinking about their wedding ceremony in Portugal, to write an email to all agencies mentioned above with the same questions regarding the organization of wedding. According to this process, I ordered a special compilation of several impressions collected from a range of people, which I organized

in Table 7. Although it was not a scientific way to collect the necessary data, this process gathered more information and gave the opportunity to use it in my report.

Table 7. Russian oriented competitors in Portugal

Parameter	Studio Victorias	Dream Weddings	Dreams to Remember	Atlantic Empire	Lusitana Sol	Wedding Portugal	Marry Me Agency
Quality of services	5	4	3	2	3	3	3
Range of service	4	4	3	3	5	3	4
Price policy	5	3	2	4	2	4	4
Advertising policy	3	3	3	2	4	3	3
Advertising in the media	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no
Advertising on the Internet	no active	active	no active	no active	active	no active	no active
Web site availability	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
Printable advertisement	no	yes	no	no	yes	no	no
Advertising in social networks	4	4	3	2	2	2	3
Location	4	3	3	4	4	3	3
Total	25	21	17	17	20	18	20

Source: Adapted by the Author

Parameter estimation is performed on a 5 scale where: 5 is very good, 4 – good, 3 – normal, 2 – weak. The data analysis shows that the "StudioVictorias" benefits are available for items such as, "quality of services", "price policy" as can be seen from the control weak link is the constancy of the consistency of personnel and inactive advertising on mass media. Competitors very often try to repeat the innovations and ideas of our agency, which is unfair competition. Some companies, such as "Dream Weddings", and "Marry me Agency", have a chance to become strong competitors in several years. Not only advertising on social networks is a strong point for the agency, but also the "word of mouth", which helps to attract new customers. "StudioVictorias" has the lowest prices on the wedding market, but the quality of the services does not depend on these low prices, as the agency is focused not only on quick income, but also on the good reputation and future customers. The agency is located in the center of Lisbon, near metro station Saldanha, which is also an advantage for both players: for the agency and for the clients. The focus of the agency is the organization of weddings, but the agency provides also different services, including tours of Lisbon and surroundings, which is very convenient for customers when they are planning a honeymoon or vacation in Portugal. The agency is working with a professional crew (photographers,

make up stylists, etc.), and the full portfolio can be found on the website and chosen according to clients taste.

4.3.5 TOP 10 WEDDING DESTINATIONS

Wedding ceremony abroad start to be more popular among Russian speaking clients in last years. According to tourist-wedding websites “Svadba-tour” (2015) below we can see the Top 10 wedding destinations in 2015 with an estimated budget for 2 types of wedding: symbolic and official (Table 2 and 3). Portugal was added into the Table to compare the approximate prices for the weddings (Svadba-tour, 2015).

Table 8. Top 10 wedding destinations for official wedding

Country	Official ceremony		
	Approximate budget		
	Wedding package ⁵	Hotel and flight ⁶	Total budget
Cyprus	950 €	1 200 €	2 150 €
Czech Republic	750 €	1 000 €	1 750 €
Cuba	1300\$	2025\$	3050\$
Sri Lanka	1050\$	2000\$	3020\$
Greece	1 100 €	1 880 €	2 980 €
Jamaica	1500\$	4110\$	5610\$
Dominican Republic	1950\$	2627\$	4577\$
Barbados	2110\$	3790\$	5900\$
Mauritius	1 100 €	3 180 €	4 280 €
Seychelles	1 180 €	3 800 €	5 000 €
Portugal	770 €	1 020 €	1 790 €

Source: Adapted from tourist-wedding websites “Svadba-tour” (2015)

⁵ wedding package includes : preparation of official administrative formalities+ Russian speaking representative, personal assistant for the wedding, wedding venue, wedding decoration, wedding bouquet and boutonniere, sparkling wine, transfer for couple, ceremony celebrant.

⁶ 1 week: Wedding budgets are approximate, the price depends on the season, the cost of the ticket and residence. Each wedding tour individually calculated, taking into account all the wishes and features couples

Table 9. Top 10 wedding destinations for symbolic wedding

Country	Symbolic ceremony		
	Approximate budget		
	Wedding package ⁷	Hotel and flight	Total budget
Cuba	990\$	2025\$	3015\$
Sri Lanka	1000\$	2000\$	3000\$
Dominican Republic	750\$	2415\$	3165\$
Barbados	1990\$	2627\$	4527\$
Mauritius	650 €	3 180 €	3 830 €
Seychelles	795 €	3 800 €	4 595 €
France	750 €	1 170 €	1 920 €
Italy	880 €	1 310 €	2 190 €
Thailand	1110\$	2000\$	3100\$
Maldives	650\$	4100\$	4750\$
Portugal	660 €	1 020 €	1 680 €

Source: Adapted from tourist-wedding websites “Svadba-tour” (2015)

Official wedding is usually more expensive than symbolic wedding as it includes preparation of documentation for the wedding. Despite Portugal not being part of the top-10 wedding destinations it was not possible to investigate exactly the place occupied worldwide, according to the researched information. However, the average budget for a wedding ceremony in Portugal was available, providing a useful tool to compare with the top 10 wedding destinations. Comparing the price of wedding in Portugal and other popular countries is possible to assume that Portugal can offer romantic places for the couple, ideal place for honeymoon, and perfect destination for all types of tourism with competitive prices. Also the flight Moscow – Lisbon costs is very comfortable with approximate 5 hours of flight time.

4.3.6 QUESTIONNAIRE

In order to determine customer preferences for the wedding, “StudioVictorias” has its own questionnaire for the bride and groom. This profile allows a starting point for the wedding organization duly taking into account the wishes and preferences of clients (ANNEX 7).

The questionnaire, which has to be filled by the bride and groom has indicated issues such as: age; occupation, profession, education, how did they met, favorite movie/song / book, the most romantic date, how the proposal of marriage was made, the

⁷ symbolic wedding include: personal assistant for the wedding, wedding venue, wedding decoration, wedding bouquet and boutonniere, sparkling wine, transfer for couple, ceremony celebrant.

most cherished dream, favorite place (park, beach, etc.), if they have pets, phobias and fears, how often they spend time together, hobbies, their strengths and weaknesses, strengths and weaknesses of their companion, their favorite time of year/day. There are additional issues related to wedding videos in the end of the questionnaire for couples who had chosen the video about their wedding.

The agency started to do questionnaires recently, in the end of 2015 since the beginning of my Internship in “StudioVictorias”. Before that, client’s preferences were indicated only by personal correspondence between the agency and the client, which was not always practical and convenient.

During the 3 months of my internship we had 6 weddings, 3 official and 3 symbolic weddings. The couples had to fill the questionnaire of “StudioVictorias” to help wedding planners in order to organize the wedding process. As the questionnaire already was developed by the agency, I had no chance to give my contribution to it and put additional questions which could be relevant for this research. The agency provided electronic copies of questionnaires for my Internship.

In total, the survey took 12 people between the ages of 25 to 42 years old, 6 men and 6 women:

Age: 1 respondents 1974 (male);
1 respondent 1987 (male);
7 respondents 1989 (3 male and 4 female);
2 respondents 1990 (male and female);
1 respondent 1991 (female);

Education: 11 respondents are highly educated (graduated)
1 respondent have master degree (post-graduated).

Travel experience: all respondents traveled abroad.

How the proposal of marriage was made: almost all the proposals of marriage were made during journeys abroad. Just one proposal was made in Russia at couple’s home because the groom has forgotten the wedding ring at home before the trip in Scandinavia.

How many couples are interested in a wedding movie: only 1 couple from 6 had ordered the wedding video. This can be explained by high cost of video service which start from 1.000€.

How long the couples are dating before getting married:

2 couples – 2 years;

2 couples – 3 years;

1 couple - 5 years;

1 couple – 7 years.

So as we can see the marriage among Russians couples is not a spontaneous decision but a conscious choice. Usually Russians are getting married before 30 years old, especially it was an “unwritten rule” for women, but this mentality start to change in recent years.

4.3.7 ADDITIONAL SERVICE: EXCURSIONS

During the time of honeymoon and vacations of newlyweds and their guests in Portugal, agency may organize their leisure time with interesting excursions in Portugal. This gives additional advantages for wedding agency for additional services comparing with other wedding agencies, whose specialization is represented only in the organization of weddings. Many clients are interested in the excursions, due to the historical sites and beautiful views offered, reasons that take the newlyweds to choose Portugal as a place for one of the most significant day in their life. Normally couples are in Portugal for at least a week to combine the wedding and honeymoon. During the couple’s stay in Portugal “StudioVictorias” offers them a standard set of excursions as a cognitive component with sightseeing around Lisbon and nearby places such as:

- Meeting at the airport and check-in assistance in a hotel;
- Walking tour of the center of Lisbon for 4 hours;
- Walking tour of Lisbon and Belem for 9 hours;
- Tour in Sintra including a visit to Quinta da Regaleira, Pena Palace and a trip to Cabo da Roca for 9 hours;
- A trip across the bridge on April 25 to the Statue of Cristo Rei and a visit to the beaches of Costa da Caparica for 9 hours;
- A trip to Lisbon’ Riviera with a visit to Cascais and Boca do Inferno for 5 hours.

Usually the couple and their guests are interested in 4 hours walk in Lisbon and a tour to Sintra, where a passage to Cabo da Roca is included.

4.3.8 SWOT ANALYSIS

SWOT analysis is a process that identifies the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of an organization. Specifically, SWOT is a basic, analytical framework that assesses what an organization can and cannot do, as well as its potential opportunities and threats (Investopedia, 2016). A SWOT analysis takes information from an environmental analysis and separates it into internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as its external opportunities and threats. The position of the wedding agency "StudioVictorias" in the market of tourist services can be described by the SWOT - analysis (Table 4).

Table 10. Results of the SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - competence in key areas; - availability of financial resources; - a unique product - conduct wedding ceremonies throughout Portugal (including Madeira island) + various options of excursions; - successful experience in the market of more than 3,5 years; - good reputation with customers; - established links with partners in Russia and Ukraine; - low prices, which do not affect the quality of provided services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - concentration of financial and strategic management in the hands of one person; - company's website not comfortable for the clients; - insufficient use of information technology to promote services; - insufficient use of Internet advertising and the media; - promotion of the company in the wedding market. - not very well organized questionnaire for couples.
External opportunities	External threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - growth in demand for weddings in Portugal; - smaller players in the market; - development of new niches (new routes of excursions and entertainment for the couple and their guests); - implementation of new tools to attract customers; - cost optimization; - ability to expand the range of value-added services to satisfy customers in a wide range; - ability to attract customers through promotional activity increase. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - currency risks; - decrease in purchasing power; - high competition; - changes in legislation; - adverse of natural phenomena; - financial crisis.

Source: Adapted by the Author

"StudioVictorias" is one of the first wedding agencies in Portugal for Russian customers, which provides services, not only for organization of weddings, but also for additional services - excursions for the newlyweds and their clients. As per the above factors that constitute the SWOT analysis, there are many opportunities and strengths that can be used to improve competitiveness, in spite of the crisis in the industry.

“StudioVictorias” has some of the lowest prices on the market of wedding agencies and a good reputation with customers and partners, as the agency is working not only on quick income, but also on future prospects, reputation and fame. “StudioVictorias” has established itself as a responsibility and trustful partner with a honest and professional team that clients can rely such a serious and important event like a wedding. The agency organizes weddings, from a small size, for two people, to a large wedding with a big budget and a wide list of guests.

Therefore, I can conclude that the wedding agency "StudioVictorias" has a strong position in the wedding market, but for a development and a competitiveness attitude it need to expand the range of services and increase the advertising activity on the Internet.

4.4. DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis of the tourism industry of Russia, its external environment and the crisis of 2014 - 2015 it is possible to formulate a number of assumptions about trends in consumer behavior and development of the market for year 2016.

As regards to consumer behavior, it is possible to conclude that, despite a significant decline in real incomes, the increase of tourism products value and consumer’s confidence crisis in tour operators, the demand for their services is expected to decline, but not so much to reduce and affect the general interest of this industry in Russians (Table 11).

Table 11. The impact of crisis on tourism industry at the macroeconomic level

	Positive influence	Negative influence
Russia	-Rising domestic tourism; -stimulate for the development of resorts in Russia; -increase the level of culture and patriotism; -stimulate for reforming the tourism industry and improving the legal framework.	- Reduction in the quality of tour operator services; - Confidence consumers crisis to tour operators; - A temporary increase in unemployment in the case of aggravation of the crisis.
Other countries	-Rising of tourist flow in some resort areas.	- Decrease in revenue; - Leaving of the market by small tourists companies.

Source: Adapted by the Author

From the list of effects of the crisis on tourism industry it can be seen that if the crisis of Russian tourism industry for Western countries are almost entirely negative and for the domestic economy negative effects of the crisis are compensated by its positive influence.

It is worth noting a result of the crisis the industry as the growth of domestic tourism, entailing, on the one hand, the increase of funds remaining in the country and, therefore, directed to development of its own resort areas and their infrastructures.

However, the negative effects of the crisis on the industry are the reducing quality of tourist services and further increase in the unemployment rate also presented at the macroeconomic level.

Thus, is possible to conclude on the basis of the analysis, the crisis of the tourism industry has not yet been overcome, but the consequences of this crisis for Russia are not only negative but also positive incentives to development.

Microenvironment for Wedding agencies was not very favorable at the end of 2014- 2015 - a decrease of consumer power (the rising of the euro), the relative saturation of the market, all of which are difficult to conduct the activities of employees of the wedding industry.

Regarding the microenvironment of wedding agency “StudioVictorias” is possible to say that the company has stability position in Portugal among Russian market and Russian speaking clients. Numbers of weddings are increasing each year, even though the external economic crisis and unstable economic situation of Russia.

The company also receives advance payments for the preparation of the wedding, which reduces the risk of finance losses in the case of couples give up their wedding for any reason.

As mentioned earlier, the single style and image of the company is very important for a wedding agency to work with clients. This concept includes not only the uniform for agency workers, but also the guest card and questionnaires, the website, trademark, color, business card, office, tagline and logo. The most important of these are: letterheads and questionnaire, office, website and uniform of employees. The wedding agency “StudioVictorias” has their letterheads, business cards and uniforms for the wedding planner (owner) and coordinator. However, the uniform is also needed for other temporary employees when organizing a wedding choosing a single style or colors to identify them.

The company has a feedback from the client where the client writes a brief report about the wedding, but there is no a full customer survey about whether the wedding organization and if the couple liked or not the wedding and if they would like to change something.

Official Website <http://studiovictorias.com> is filled with the necessary information for customers, but at the same time, it is not convenient to browse and search for specific information. To find out the cost of special wedding offers, the client need to write an email to the agency, which is not always convenient if a customer wants to compare prices with other wedding agencies which are represented in Portugal.

Any individual entrepreneur can conduct a successful campaign for their business due to the large spread of prices in the various media vehicles.

Wedding agency "StudioVictorias" has no active advertising on the Internet and the media. In order to attract potential customers, it is necessary to carry out such promotional activities:

- Placement of advertisements in specialized wedding publications, advertising, organization of wedding celebrations, festivals and event activities;
- Optimizations of the website and promote it on the Internet;
- Optimization of portfolio content, which is necessary to work with clients.

To promote their services agency need to establish contacts and cooperation agreements with the salons of wedding dresses and accessories, hotels, restaurants and car rental companies, wedding agencies and tourism companies in Russian Speaking countries.

The questionnaire for the customer surveys was designed by the owner of the agency based also in my suggestions in order to help in the preparation for the wedding. The questionnaire consists in 3 pages with open questions that give opportunity to the clients to answer in detail and clarify their responses, all questions are relating to the couple, their preferences and their love story that helps us to understand what might cheer the newlyweds, and what they fear and do not want to see on their wedding.

Perfectly prepared, the questionnaire should make the respondent's impression of effortless dialogue with discreet companion on the topic of interest to the respondent. Selecting a proper structure and design in addition to content issues of the questionnaire is decisive to create and leave a good impression to the clients.

The questionnaire does not have spelling errors and all fields allow respondents to express their opinion and suggestions. A clear questionnaire can show the seriousness of the company, causing its credibility and respect.

But there are some disadvantages in the organization of questionnaire's questions:

One of the weaknesses of the questionnaires is a fragmentation of issues, such as the question of the age and profession are on different units, while the rules for the development of questionnaires is that this kind of issues should be there in the same units of questions. Since the questionnaire is a new tool for the wedding agency, the owner decided to focus on the questions related just for the wedding organization.

In the questionnaire there are no questions related to excursions:

- What kind of excursions couple prefers;
- What they wanted to visit and see in Portugal;
- If the couple have been in Portugal before, if so, what they liked and remembered the most?

The questionnaire has 2 repeated questions: how the question of marriage was made?

The questionnaire is not a psychological test, it is a tool that helps us to organize the perfect wedding, so agency need to avoid repeating the same questions to customer have a good impression about the company and not to confuse them giving extremely attention with repeated subjects and avoid two different for the same question.

According to Dillman (1978) the question must be placed in descending order of social significance (importance); respondents are likely to appreciate and consider more important questions placed in the beginning of the questionnaire, and the least important at the end. The second important principle issues of location of questions - grouping them in a way similar to the content of questions were located close to each other (i.e., units), and within blocks located next to questions of the same type.

Giving the welcomes to respondents in the introduction of the questionnaire with a brief description of the purpose of the survey and instructions how to fill out the profile, if necessary, is also important. Upon completion of the survey do not forget to thank the interviewed it is important to not forget to thank the interviewed for their time. It should be added the acknowledgments page at the end of the questionnaire to leave a good impression on the client.

After the analyses of the business model I can conclude that in general “StudioVictorias” has a well-developed business model, but some elements can be optimized. Based on the analysis of the company's competitive environment and the external environment contact made SWOT analysis, summarizing all the above, and offering all possible tools resilience wedding agency.

4.5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of these recommendations for the wedding agency is to attract new customers and strengthen our position in the market.

Regarding advertisement: Active advertising on the Internet, media and specialized magazines, wedding forums to promote services.

Agency business needs advertising to survive. In order to attract potential customers the agency needs to:

- Place advertisements in publications that are specialized in advertising weddings and celebrations events;
- Optimize website and additional services;
- Develop a portfolio to show for potential customers.

In addition, wedding agency should promote the cooperation with the wedding salons, restaurants and cafes, transport companies, to make appropriate business cards and brochures that will be distributed to customers of these companies with the purpose of advertising agency services. Perhaps for the first time it is - the maximum advertising costs that wedding agency will be able to afford. Later, agency can try to arrange a small shooting commercials and advertisements on the radio.

Regarding Style: A single corporate identity can be a tool to create additional competitive advantages for our wedding agency.

Thus, allowing the company to increase awareness, enhance its reputation and create a common perception of all information related to a particular tour operator, which can also be used for the wedding. The wedding agency “StudioVictorias” have their guest cards, website, business cards and uniforms for the owner and coordinator. But the uniform is also needed for other participants in organizing a wedding or a single style and colors when choosing clothes. The proposal to have better image on wedding market among clients and to improve organization of weddings is to develop a system

for monitoring the work of the wedding agency by interviewing consumers. When customers buy a wedding package, they can agree to do a survey after the wedding. Survey in this case is a special table with the customer name, contact details and date of the wedding. After the wedding, the assistant of wedding planner calls to the customer and asks about their impression of the work of the agency, namely, asking the following questions:

- Evaluate the usability of the site;
- Estimate the completeness and clarity of the information about the services of the agency provided by wedding planner;
- Evaluate the courtesy and culture of communication of agency workers;
- Evaluate the work and organization of your wedding;
- What you liked and did not like during the organization of wedding and during the ceremony;
- Would you like to give some suggestions regarding to our services?

This information will be important for the agency to have a quality control of provided services and understand the opinion of customers about agency.

Regarding website: Chuvatkin & Shtefan (2013) raises the question about the agency website. He substantiates the advantages of the site to adapt to empower on consumers to take part in the formation of tourism product.

The author notes that at present most of the tour operators only offers a package of services including all aspects of the tourist rest, and do not allow any tourist to influence component parts, or even find out the cost of individual services within the tour. This approach is a classic for tourism industry that more than half of the target audience of tour operators (Russian citizens which are going abroad) prefer to plan a vacation on their own. Creating a tourist site by the operator on the basis of the Internet, which allows tourists to make a tour or buy only its tour parts, according to the author, has the following benefits:

- Fuller satisfaction of the needs of tourists by modifying additional services and goods;
- Increasing the potential audience of customers using resources available on the Internet;
- Increase the level of consumer confidence.

On the website agency can add information about excursions: tourism destinations, information about excursions - the price, duration, routes, prices of

additional services, company news, and to create a photo-section with clients on our excursions.

Regarding a new tool on website I can suggest to develop a wedding calculator where the couple can select the items that they need especially for their wedding, ideas and budget to find out the cost of the wedding, which can be comfortable for couples with different budgets for weddings.

Wedding calculator can include the next options for the clients to construct the wedding according to their budgets:

Table 12: example of wedding calculator items

Number of guests	To choose the option
10	
11-30	
31-60	
61-120	
121 and more	

Wedding venue	To choose the option
Lisbon	
Sintra	
Cabo da Roca	
Bussaco	
Alentejo	
Porto	
Madeira	

Source: Adapted by the Author

Next stage on wedding calculator will include 3 options for each wedding item:

- Base option (not so expensive prices for this segment/area)
- Medium option (the medium price range for this segment/area)
- Platinum option (luxury prices for this segment/area)

The most important and popular options to include on wedding ceremony are:

1. VENUE PLACE, BANQUET MENU:
 - Rental space for on-site registration
 - Wedding cake
 - Alcoholic beverages
2. BASIC SERVICES
 - Wedding represent
 - DJ
 - Wedding photographer
 - Wedding videography
 - Outside registration

- Live music
 - Fireworks
3. WEDDING DECORATIONS
- Bridal bouquet and boutonniere for the groom
 - Decoration of outgoing registration
 - Decoration of presidium zone
 - Decoration of guest tables
 - The plan of Guests seating
 - Cards of seating guests
4. TECHNICAL SUPPORT SITE
- Sound equipment
 - Lighting equipment
 - Video Equipment
5. ADDITIONAL SERVICES
- Transport for newlyweds
 - Shuttle for guests
 - The stylist for the guests

Regarding the questionnaire: In the questionnaire of agency can be add the number of days that couples supposed to stay Portugal, and how they prefer to spent holidays - active, passive, or prefer the beach, castles, sports, etc., taking into account their wishes, being possible to develop a tourist route in the remaining days of their stay in Portugal.

Regarding the excursions: The development of new directions of excursions will help to improve competitiveness, expand specialization and increase the number of customers. The tour program may combine cognitive, active, gastronomic tourism and beach holidays, eco-tourism and individual trips, for example a visit to the fishing industry.

For enthusiasts of active vacation agency can offer sea fishing, diving and surfing. Gastronomical component should be part of the offers: tasting of local wines, exotic fruits and products and acquaintance with national cuisine. Portugal offers great beach holidays and all excursions allow to take advantage of the beaches.

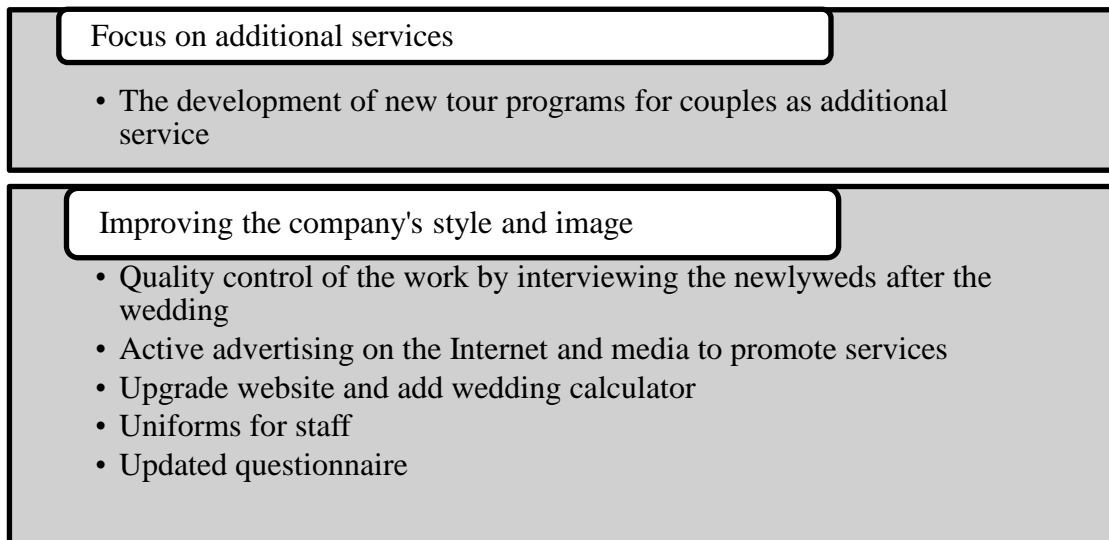
Excursions are conducted in Russian language, but in order to raise the level of cultural tourism, it is possible to conduct tours in English or Portuguese, which will also expand its customer audience.

4.6. SUMMARY

Summarizing the analysis results of external environment of the wedding agency I can conclude that currently the macro environment of the company is extremely difficult to do business. The main risks are a decrease in income levels and the fall of the national Russian currency against Euro. However, these risks can be offset by technological capabilities - adapting to the new situation and the use of information technologies and the internet to promote products and increase customer loyalty.

Thus, we have made recommendations in two areas regarding the development of the strategy of "StudioVictorias" to improve the sustainability of wedding businesses (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Directions to improve strategies



Source: Adapted by the Author

Summarizing the analysis of the internal environment of wedding agency "StudioVictorias" it should be noted that in general the company's strategy is designed properly, however, there are some risks associated with external and internal environments of the company. Within the framework of SWOT analysis were reviewed all possible steps to improve the company's business, and depending on the final results of the analysis the most relevant recommendations for the company were discussed in detail.

CONCLUSION

Wedding tourism is a new niche in tourism and a new opportunity for the countries to attract a new type of tourist which is not deeply analyzed as tourism in general, but the trend can be identified from many years ago, where started to begin the mass wedding tourism in specific countries as Mauritius, Seychelles, Dominican Republic and others.

In Portugal, this type of tourism is relatively new, where Portugal has all the qualities and features that can appeal to the newlyweds. However, it is necessary to position Portugal not only from a tourist point of view, but also as a country where dreams come true, and where the official wedding can be linked with the honeymoon.

Wedding tours in Portugal have all the necessary resources and conditions for a happy and interesting time during the wedding ceremony and afterwards the honeymoon.

Since the beginning, the study and analysis of the wedding tourism seemed interesting and unusual, but actually in the process of writing the work there were a lot of issues and problems, such as lack of information about Russian tourists arriving in Portugal, and the number of weddings held in Portugal for non-Portuguese citizens. Accurate data is very difficult, including specific literature of wedding tourism, particularly about wedding tourism in Portugal. In this case, I had to use the literature and data from tourism as a general overview of the subject, which would be similarly important for my research. For future researchers I would suggest to explore information from a variety of sources, such as weddings and wedding clients, in order to establish comparisons or arguments, which could help to provide extensive information regarding the changes in the economic and political situation in Russia and the wedding tourism in Portugal.

The main tasks to analyze what motivates Russian clients to have a wedding in Portugal and which perspectives have a Russian based wedding agency in Portugal were completed and analyzed.

The purpose of this internship was the formulation of recommendations for the wedding agency "StudioVictorias", but this goal required the implementation of a number of tasks and the use of several analysis tools providing some recommendations of how to improve the wedding business in Portugal.

Thus, the aim of this work was achieved: recommendations were formulated for the company. In addition, a deep analysis of the theoretical and methodological

foundations of tourism and wedding business had allowed to predict general trends in the industry and to identify the features of the crisis, limiting the use of foreign experience to analyze it and overcome it.

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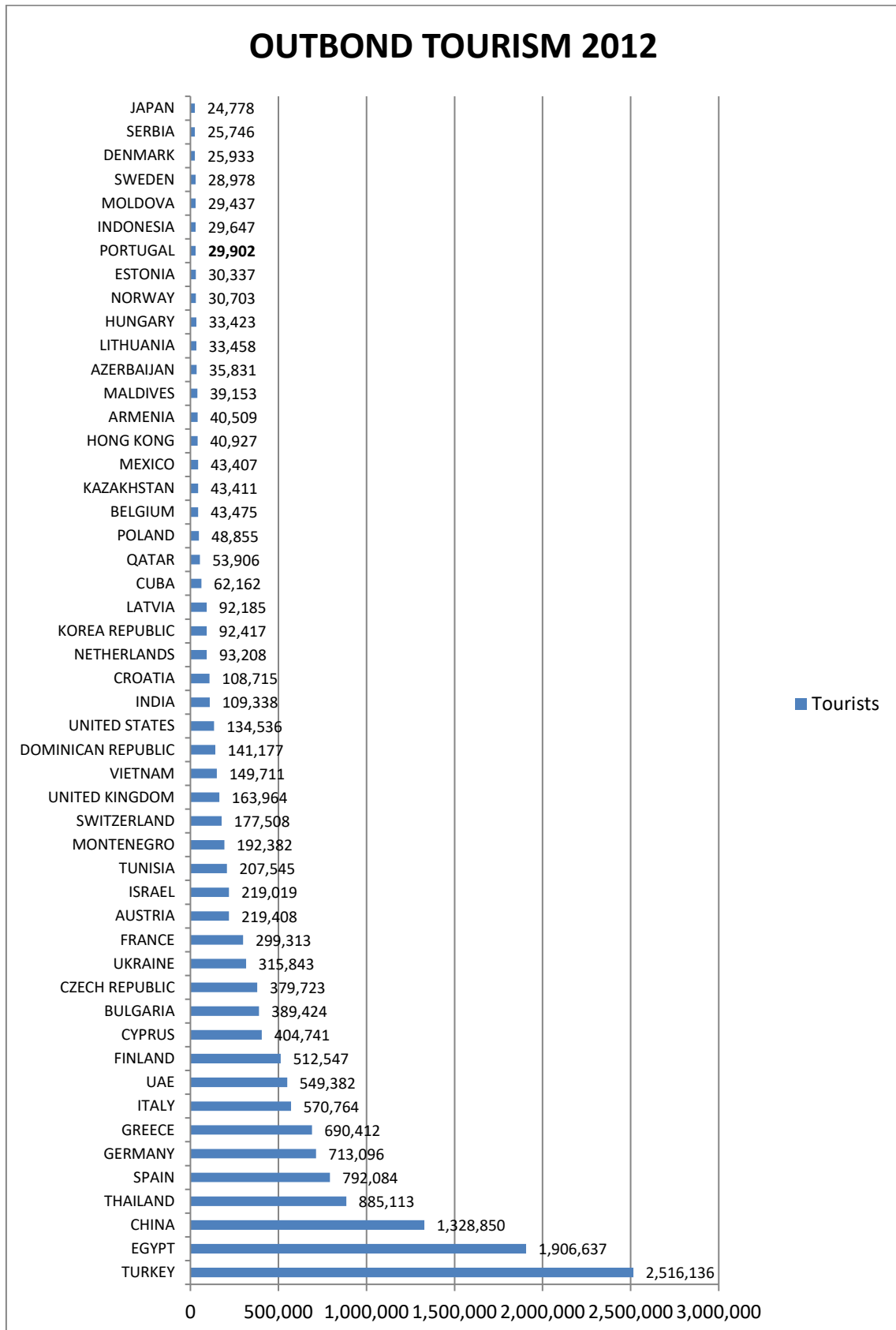
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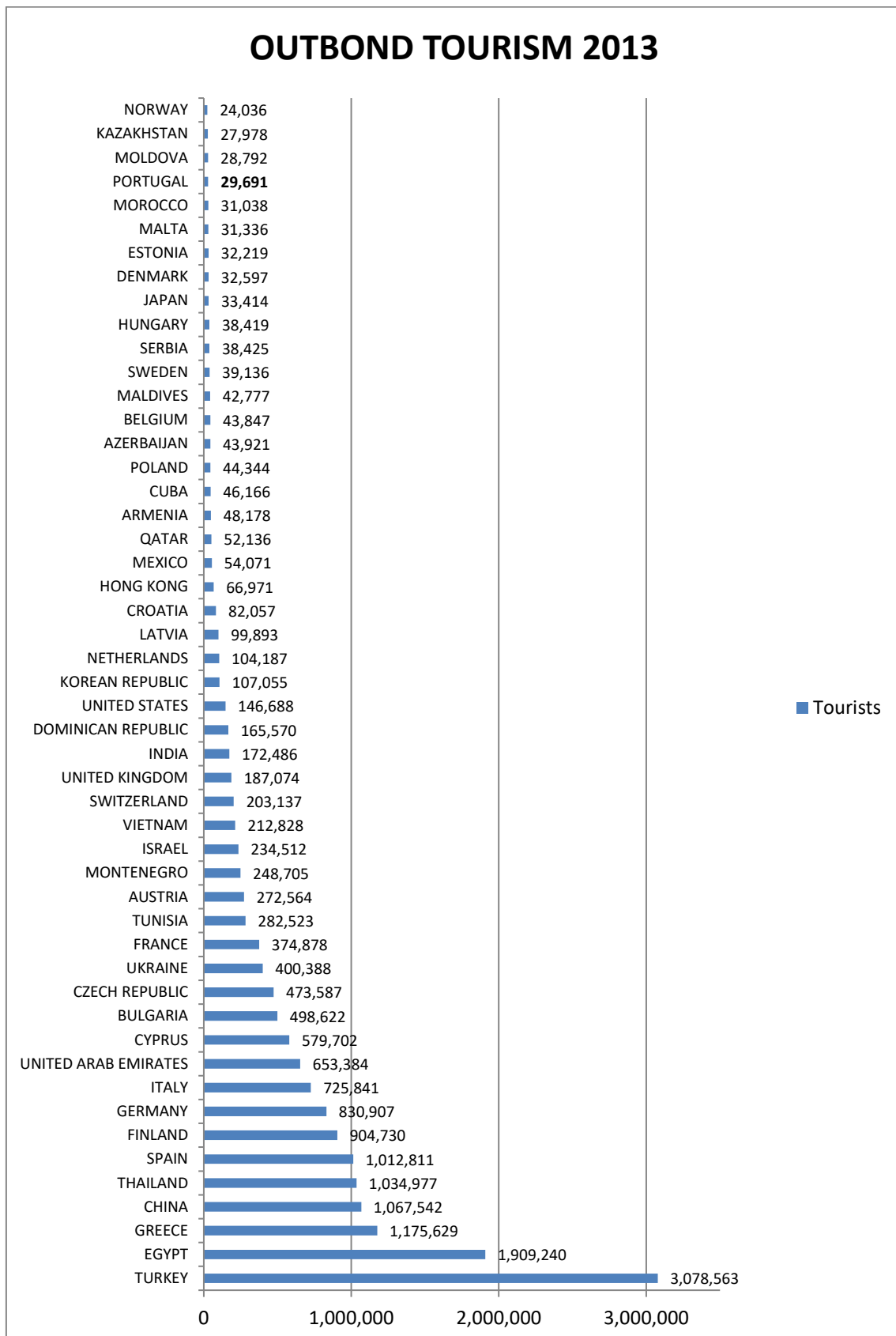
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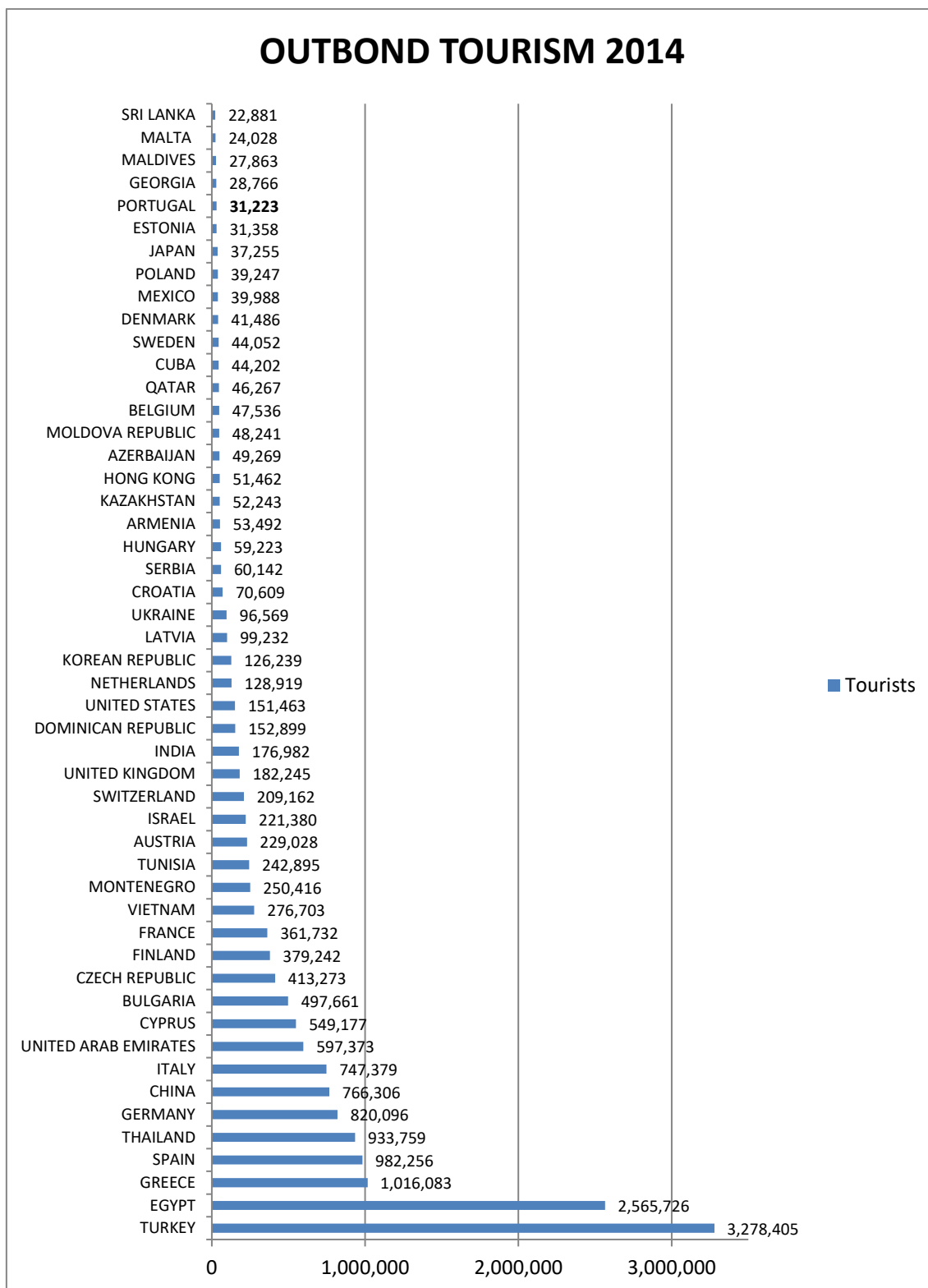
TOP 50 countries visited by Russians tourists



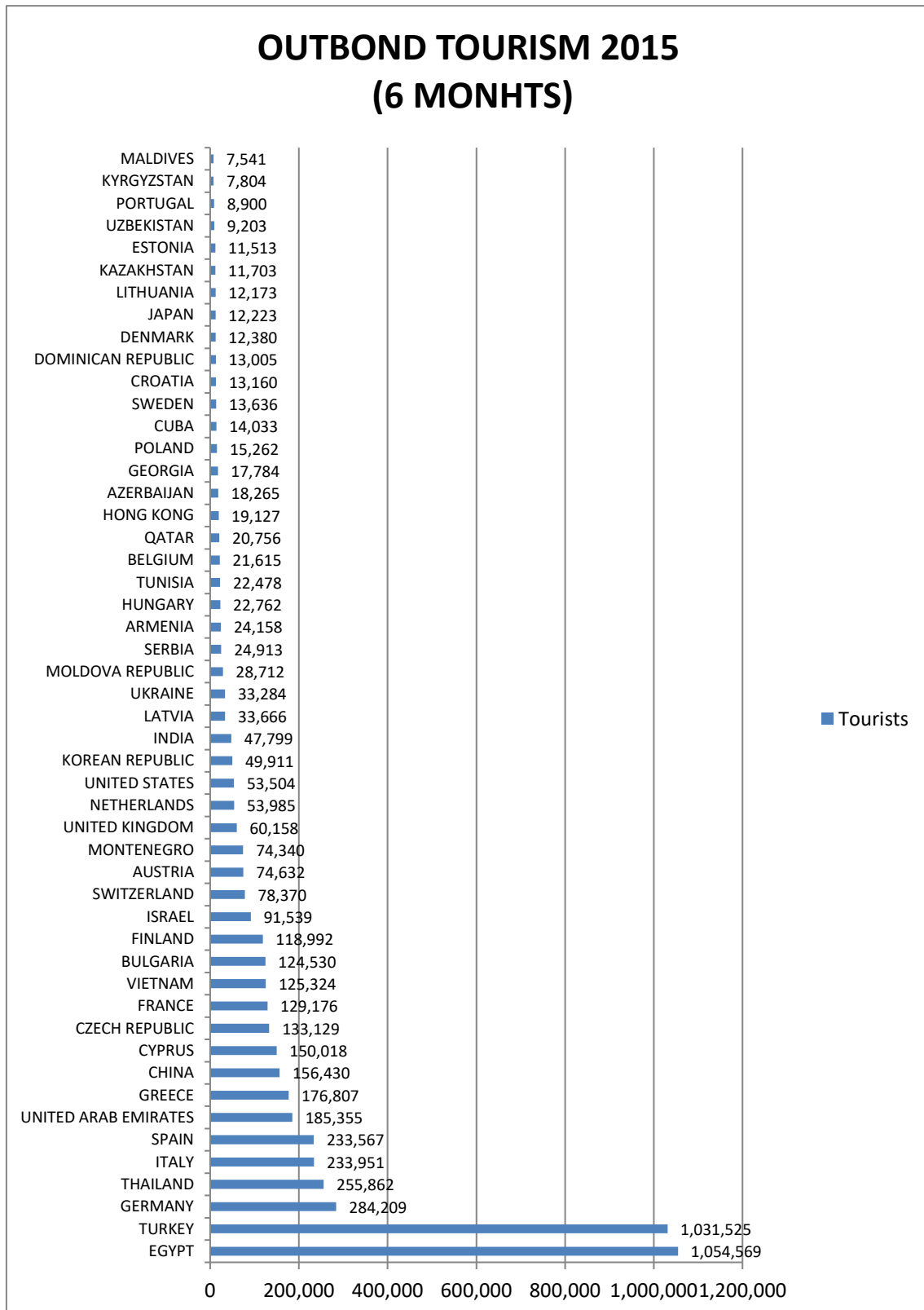
TOP 50 countries visited by Russians tourists



TOP 50 countries visited by Russians tourists



TOP 50 countries visited by Russians tourists



Wedding packs 2015



Wedding Packs - 2015
StudioVictorias

Silver

- personal assistant for the wedding day and preparations
- wedding venue*
- wedding ceremony decoration (simple)
- wedding bouquet and boutonniere
- sparkling wine for celebration
- transfer for couple (4 hours)
- ceremony celebrant



1290 €

Gold

- personal assistant for the wedding day and preparations
- wedding venue*
- wedding ceremony decoration (simple)
- wedding bouquet and boutonniere
- sparkling wine for celebration
- transfer for couple (4 hours)
- ceremony celebrant
- stylist (hair&make-up)
- photographer (4-5 hours)



1990 €

Platinum

- personal assistant for the wedding day and preparations
- wedding venue (including some of the palaces)
- wedding ceremony decoration
- wedding bouquet and boutonniere
- sparkling wine for celebration
- transfer for couple (4 hours)
- ceremony celebrant
- stylist (hair&make-up)
- photographer (4-5 hours)
- videomaker (4-5 hours)



2990 €

LIST OF DOCUMENTS FOR OFFICIAL WEDDING

The official registration of a marriage abroad has its own characteristics.

The Basic conditions and procedures for marriage abroad established by the Family Constitution of the Russian Federation are described in article 158 of the RF IC where is stated that marriages between Russian citizens and marriages between Russian citizens and foreign nationals or stateless persons are recognized as valid in Russia under the following conditions:

- 1) Compliance of the law, on the territory of which they are concluded;
- 2) If there are no circumstances that prevent the marriage.

Abroad Russian citizens may enter into marriage primarily in the diplomatic missions or consular institutions of the Russian Federation. A marriage contracted in these conditions is equivalent to a marriage by the registrar of the Russian Federation authorities, and does not require additional legalization.

In addition, the marriage can be concluded in the relevant organizations of the foreign state (municipality, other public authority / local government, which carries out the registration of marriage in the territory of the country).

The documents, which are likely to need:

- passport;
- birth certificate;
- certificate of marital status;
- If this is not the first marriage, you will need a certificate of divorce or death of a spouse;
- previous marriage certificate (if applicable);
- a certificate of change of name;

All the above documents must be translated into a foreign language, notarized translation, and then legitimize the established order (apostille or consular legalization). All this can be done in the registry offices and the notary, paying the state fee.

BRIDE'S QUESTIONNAIRE

Full name	
Date of Birth	
Dating day, place and how the proposal to marry was made	
Other common special dates	
Symbolic music, film, book or love story in relationship	
Your favorite movie, cartoon or TV show	
Favorite character from the movie or cartoon	
The most romantic date and how it was	
The most treasured dream	
Occupation, profession, education	
How the proposal to marry was made?	
Favorite place (park, coffee shop, bridge, river or sea, etc.)	

<http://studiovictorias.wordpress.com>, e-mail: studio.victorias.pt@gmail.com
Telemóvel: (351) 964 20 60 40

Your phobias / pathological fears (height, spiders, horses, etc.)	
How do you call the groom	
Favorite clothes	
Do you have pets	
The most interesting case happened with you and your partner	
How do you prefer to spend time together	
What are your hobbies	
What, in your opinion, is your strength	
What, in your opinion, is your weakness	
What human qualities do you like more in his character	
Favorite time of the year, time of the day	
Interesting events that occurred during the dating period	

<p>Questions for video clips</p>	<p><i>*to fill only if couple are interest in videoclip of the wedding</i></p>
<p>Resources for filming (helicopter, mansion in gothic style or a nightclub, handmade owl, etc.). That may apply to film, and that would not be financially a cost for you.</p>	
<p>What do you liked and did not liked in the other wedding videos that you have seen</p>	
<p>Favorite music, song</p>	
<p>What is in your appearance you like most and what you do not like.</p>	
<p>Suggestions for style and theme of the wedding movie</p>	