



Business Management Strategies

Project 3

Skiing Despite the Coronavirus? Tourists Torn Between the Desire for Normality and the Need for Safety

The Covid-19 pandemic caused an unforeseeable early closure of ski resorts in spring 2020. In order to adapt the safety measures for the winter season 2020/2021 to the needs and expectations of guests, it was important for the South Tyrolean ski resorts to obtain information and opinions from their customers. This study was conducted in collaboration with some of South Tyrol's north-eastern ski resorts. Guests of the South Tyrolean ski resorts affiliated to the project were invited to participate in an online survey conducted between the end of September and the beginning of October 2020, when the opening of the ski facilities still seemed to be possible. A total of 363 people from the DACH (209) and IT (154) markets took part in the study. Most of the participants in the study stated that

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they expected changes caused by the pandemic and 86% considered ski lifts to be a possible place of contagion. The queue that forms to access the lifts is also perceived as a place at risk by 82% of the respondents. Closed places such as huts, bars and restaurants are rated as infectious by 67%, while the percentage rises to 96% for après-ski venues. However, guests stated they are willing to take the necessary protective measures and adapt their behaviour to new circumstances. The study also reveals that, again because of the Coronavirus, guests prefer to opt for smaller and possibly open lifts. The way customers buy tickets will also change due to the pandemic. Consumers now tend to prefer buying tickets online over buying them at ticket offices. Despite the possible changes and limitations, more than 80% of participants said they would definitely go on a skiing holiday.

The results of the study were shared with the ski resorts involved in the study and presented in an online presentation to representatives of the regional government and tourism interest groups.



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