

TOURIST DESTINATIONS IMAGE IN GOVERNMENTAL WEBSITES
An Investigation of Three Cities in Brazil

*Salomão Alencar de Farias
Edvan Cruz Aguiar
Michelle Helena Kovacs
Felipe Gondim Andrade
Universidade Federal de Pernambuco
Recife – Brasil*

Tourism is an import industry in the Brazilian scene and its image of an exotic country is well-known. The growth of the access to the Internet and the dynamism of the flow of information in this media, led to the development of destination websites, with the objective to inform and promote localities globally. The objective of this study was to analyze how the access to the tourism website of a specific destination can influence the evaluation of its image. The research had an exploratory-descriptive character, with a transversal nature. First a literature review was applied and the participation of six judges evaluating the chosen tourism websites, objects of this research: city of São Paulo (www.cidadedesao Paulo.com), Rio de Janeiro (www.rioguiaooficial.com.br) and Rio Grande do Sul (www.turismo.rs.gov.br). In the descriptive phase a survey with a non random sample of one hundred and eleven respondents was carried measuring the image of the destination before and after the exposition of subjects to the websites. Non-parametric test of hypothesis of Wilcoxon indicated significant differences between attributes evaluated for the respondents before and after the expositions to the websites. Thus, it is considered important that the managers of websites from localities worry about the correct planning and development of the tourism websites, since the results of the study corroborate the assumption that a website can influence the image of the tourist destination.

KEY WORDS: *tourist marketing, perceived image, tourism Website.*