

DISTRIBUTION CHANNEL STRATEGY IN RESTAURANTS IN BALNEÁRIO CAMBORIÚ, BRAZIL

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The performance of the distribution channels is linked to several potential factors that the company has previously analyzed. This market research helps identifying the right channel for the company by evaluating the circumstances surrounding the product and the market. The choice of the channel must effectively plan the delivery of the product to the customer. The restaurant industry faces many challenges such as fierce competition, innovations in information and communication technology (ICT) and increasingly demanding customers. Restaurants can use multiple distribution channels to reach consumers, targeting the different stages of the buying process, and gaining competitive advantage. In this context, the objective of this research is to analyze the strategies of restaurants regarding the distribution channels used to attract the customers in the tourist destination Balneário Camboriú / SC, Brazil. An exploratory and descriptive study was conducted with a quantitative approach. From a population of 162 restaurants, we obtained 110 valid questionnaires, aimed at identifying the following strategies: direct channels, indirect channels, management channels, and use of social media. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze data and variable means are presented in line charts and IPA grids. The results indicate that the management channels and the direct channels are ranked the highest on importance and implementation by the respondents.

KEY WORDS: *Distribution channels, restaurants, Balneário Camboriú, Brazil.*