

# The role of Integrated Marketing Communications in creation of destination brand equity during the COVID-19 pandemic

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# The role of Integrated Marketing Communications in creation of destination brand equity during the COVID-19 pandemic

## **Abstract**

Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) have been considered as one of the key assets in brand equity building. The IMC approach relies on conveying a clear and consistent message about the brand through marketing communication tools and channels. In the travel and tourism context, making sure that consumers receive a consistent image about the destination brand is now more important than ever, considering uncertainties that the COVID-19 pandemic has brought to the sector. This paper examines the impact of IMC on brand equity of Croatia, a destination that has experienced a remarkable boom this season, regardless of the pandemic. Data collection took place among 333 tourists who visited the country during September and October 2021. Findings reveal positive effects of IMC on four destination brand equity dimensions, i.e. brand awareness, brand image, perceived quality, and brand loyalty. The paper has a number of implications for authorities and destination marketing practitioners.

**Keywords:** *IMC; destination brand equity; pandemic*

**Track:** Tourism Marketing