

IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF MARINAS

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-Abstract-

Tourism is a major subsector of services and it's got diversified branches. Among those branches, marine tourism which is the most common one, reserves an important place in Turkey's future by making contributions to national economy. In this regard, yachting and marina management are two significant subject areas which deserve closer interest. Like other tourism enterprises, marinas should cope with an increasing variety of services and competition environment. For marina managements to make right orientations and future positioning, it's theoretically and practically useful to make business oriented analysis on them. In accordance with this aim, an extensive review of the literature has been made, marinas have been examined on site, besides, five marina managers in Turkey and one in Britain have been interviewed by using an unstructured in-depth interview technique as a qualitative research method. As a result of this study, knowledge and proposals put forward for all categories of marina managers about marina facilities and services, general structure and design principles and human resources.

Keywords: *Marina; Marina Management; Services Management*

JEL Classification: M10

1. INTRODUCTION

Marine tourism will play a leading role in Turkey's future with its contributions to the national economy. A number of activities can be counted under the title of marine tourism, such as diving, scuba diving, sport fishing and yachting. Nevertheless, such activities as fishing from a pier, exploring inter-tidal rock pools or whale watching from a headland are controversial (Orams, 1999: 9). Both of yachting and marina management are the issues to be considered thoroughly within the marine tourism realm.

In the past, marinas had been classified as luxury consumption but today they are demanded by people of middle income, as well as high income groups. Leisure boating globally is experienced in various ways, such as ocean cruising, boating at inland waters (lake, river and canals), game fishing, water skiing and so on. Therefore, marina operators should find ways of accommodating various boaters' needs for many kinds of services and facilities. Within the expanding international tourism, both the marinas and other tourist industries should become aware of the needs and desires of boaters as tourists (Stone, 2000).

In the case of Turkey, especially west and south coasts of the country is becoming more attractive for the worldwide sailing society. In this regard, it would be necessary and usefull to analyse marinas on site for their benefit and longterm planning. Aim of this study, in which marinas were examined on site and marina managers were interviewed personally, is to make contributions to the field by presenting information related to the marina facilities and services, physical structures, management and staff profiles and their socio-economic status.

1.1. Marina Facilities and Services

IMI (International Marina Institute) defines a destination resort marina as;

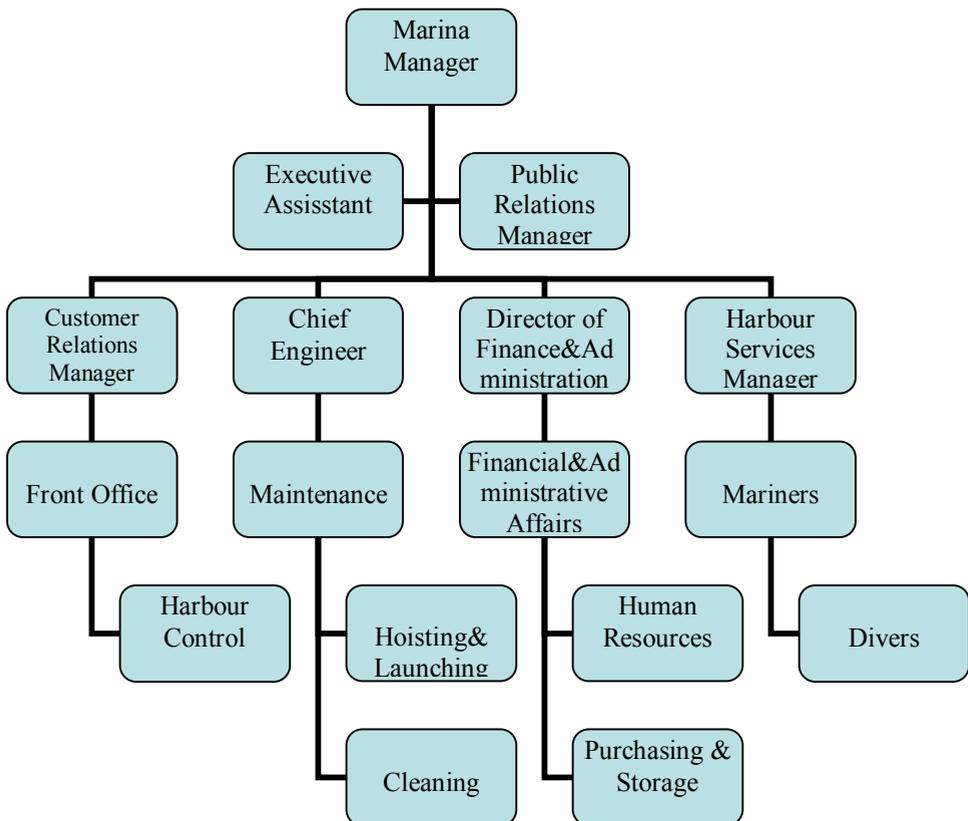
accessible by land and by water, including berth places for visitors, accommodation, dining facilities, swimming pool and other entertainment and leisure facilities that provide a resort atmosphere (IMI, 1998). For being successful today, a destination resort marina must be something more than just a parking place for boats. They should offer a variety of facilities and services. Because, once the boaters are off the boat they start looking for many kinds of conveniences such as a boatyard, showers, laundry facilities, restaurants, cafe and bars, vending machines, a fish cleaning station, shops for fishing and boating equipment, grocery and souvenir shops, boutiques and so on (Stone, 2000).

In addition to the above mentioned services and facilities, dry stack boat storage is becoming important especially in the financial success of marinas. The vertical storage of boats on land in rack systems, dry stack boat storage is based upon the warehousing rack industry (Farrel, 1996). A number of variables effect the marina markets, but the demand for dry stack storage is directly effected by the supply and demand for berth places in the area. When the wet slips in marinas are full and demand for berth place is high, dry stack storage becomes applicable and beneficial (Simpson, 1998).

1.2. General and Administrative Structure of Marinas

Marinas can be placed onshore or offshore. The main concern for onshore marinas is sufficient space such that the land space should be equal to water space (Mill, 2001: 170). Besides, marinas require a constant water level all year long. Differences in water levels due to tides, storms, rain etc. must be noted and their impact must be observed (Mill, 2001: 170). There are four major principles in the design of marinas (Phillips, 1986: 235): geography determines the engineering; engineering determines the profile; profile determines the layout and layout determines the architecture. Every marina should have a satisfying office building on site for the operating and administrative staff and there should be sufficient signs showing the location of the Harbour Office (TYHA, 2007, 60). Figure 1 depicts the organisational structure of a marina that has approximately 400-500 slips (Gür, 2010).

Figure 1. Organisational Structure for 400-500 Berths Marina



Kaynak: Gür, M. (2010) Milta Marina Customer Relations Manager, Personal interview, Bodrum.

2. METHODOLOGY

Qualitative methodology was used in this research. Qualitative research is used to have an understanding about people's attitudes, behaviours, values, interests, drives, passions, culture or lifestyles. It's used to inform business decisions, policy development and communication (Ereaut, 2012). Managers of five marinas in Turkey having "Five Gold Anchor Award" and the manager of "Brighton Marina" (having the same award granted by The Yacht Harbour Association) have been selected as the data source of this research. In-depth interview techniques was used to collect data from the respondents about three main topics consisting of **the general structure, the type and layout and the administration of marinas**. With each respondent an unstructured in-depth interview was conducted. Unstructured interviews allow researchers to focus the participants' speech on a certain topic and may allow researchers the opportunity to test out their understanding that they have at the beginning of the study (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2011). One of the research participants has the title of "Coordinator of Marinas" for a group of companies' Bodrum, Didim and Fethiye marinas. Other marinas in Turkey and Britain had "Marina Managers" interviewed. Turkish marina managers were coded as CM1, MM2 and MM3, and British is seen with his surname Garland. Only one of the participants accepted the use of voice recorder during the interview.

3. FINDINGS

3.1. Respondents' Comments on the General Structure of Marinas

Garland: Marinas are constructed at waterside as a whole body having settlements both on the water and the land. It's a fundamental issue for marinas to have adequate space for their land settlements. International general acceptance is that the land area should be equivalent to water space. When we come to the water settlement of a marina, we must mention two crucial factors; 1. Depth of water, 2. Tidal differences. Besides of tides, level differences created by storms, rain and snow waters must be noted and their effects must be observed.

MM3: Inside of a mooring basin such as a marina, stagnancy of water may cause problems. If water flow is inadequate, impureness from fuel station operations may degrade water quality.

3.2. Respondents' Comments on the Type and Layout of Marinas

CM1: Marina construction involves lots of tricky and exquisite engineering from beginning to end. According to the natural structure and geographical formations, calculations are undertaken by the engineers. As a result of those calculations marina profile (type of marina) can be determined. No matter what the marina profile is, the land area should be equal to the water area as a basic layout rule.

Garland: In many marinas, some of the land area (from 20% to 35%) is used as parking lot. In regard to the assessment of layout and marina profile, we must mention three important factors; 1. Differences in the level of water, 2. Financial potential of the investors and 3. Importance that the boaters and boat owners give to security.

MM2: Inside the marina basin, turning areas are needed for boats to change places, to maneuver, to enter and to exit. Width of these turning areas depends on the type and size of the boats and experience in addition to the ability of yachtsmen, as well.

3.3. Respondents' Comments on the Administration of Marinas

MM2: Structure of a marina organisation takes form depending on the site of establishment, size, marina's layout plan, necessary amount of staff and their qualifications, management policies and variety of services. Additionally, size of the organisation is directly related with the capacity (number of berth places) of marina. In this regard, a large scale marina has a management team that consists of five or six department heads and a Marina Manager at the top.

Garland: As a marina manager, I have a "Maritime Leisure Management" degree from Southampton Solent University. Additionally I am one of the CMMs (Certified Marina Managers) from International Marina Institute. I believe that both hospitality and maritime education is necessary for marina operations and management.

4. CONCLUSION

Admittedly, many people increasingly need to flee from stress and chaotic life style of cities each day. It's well understood that these severe conditions direct people to go on longer vacations in order to find peace in nature and necessarily to go to sea. Yachting is a rapid growing special interest tourism activity and just as Richins (1992, p.196) stated, in future years it will continue to provide enjoyment and satisfaction to a wider cross-section of the travelling public. In this regard, yachting and marinas inevitably become a current issue. If the matter of subject is importance of tourism sektor in Turkey, it must be noted that the sector needs to be accelerated in terms of increased revenues (Altay ve Akyurt, 2010). Right at this juncture, marinas come into prominence for Turkey's tourism. It's been thought that both public and private sectors' attention and giving some more priority to marinas would be very beneficial for tourism sektor in terms of revenues; because of the tourists coming by their private yachts should spend much more money comparing to mass tourists. As a result of current study:

- Marina managers are suggested to act sensitively on general and administrative structure, and layout of marinas as well.

- Additionally, they are recommended to self-evaluate their organisations with regard to the facilities, services and qualified staff.
- According to those self-evaluations, they are advised to reorganize their services and human resources; restructure the layout of their marina and facilities.
- Marina operators are especially suggested to follow the reforms of employee recruitment in their field. Such that in the year 2010, some of the government and foundation universities have started two-year programs named “Marina Management” and “Sea and Port Management”. These programs aim to train qualified staff and managers precisely for marinas.

In conclusion, it must not be forgotten that marinas need qualified human resources for sustainable development just as all other service organisations do.

Limitations and Future Research

Alongside its theoretical and practical uses, current study was bounded by five Turkish marinas and one British marina having “Five Gold Anchor Award”. Future studies should include same category marinas of other Mediterranean countries and researchers should enlarge the sample size. The qualitative nature of current study might be seen as another limitation of the research. Use of quantitative methods could be suggested for future research.

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