



# ICT SKILLS AND INTERNET



MODULE	ITC SKILLS AND INTERNET
UNIT	INTRODUCTION
LESSON	<b>1</b> 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

<b>UNIT 1</b>	<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>4</b>
	1.1. INTRODUCTION	4
	1.2. HOW THIS MODULE WILL HELP YOU AND YOUR BUSINESS	5
	1.3. BROADER BENEFITS OF USING ICTS	9

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. INTRODUCTION

Governments across the World are encouraging people and businesses to learn about and to use **ICTs** (**I**nformation and **C**ommunications **T**echnologies). The challenge is to get "online and digitally literate" (European Commission, 1999) and to "quickly exploit the opportunities of the new economy and in particular, the Internet" (European Council, 2000).

Technology, computers and ICT are already fast becoming an integral way in which many of us work and do business. This section will provide information on the benefits and possibilities of using technology to enhance your business. Because each business is individual, our approach will be to provide a framework where you can assess what technologies are right for your business, understand what they can do for you, and how to use them. The focus will remain firmly on proven business processes and working technologies. Any new technology that can increase your 'bottom line' for improving business is worth investigating – you will learn about the basics here.

Using ICTs is like other things in life - only when you try them out yourself will you see how easy or how useful they are for you.

Our main focus will be on doing what you are doing already, but seeing how ICTs can enhance these processes. In other words, you will be learning skills to respond to your practical needs. The only requirement for

this module is an open mind. Once you learn about and consider some of these ICTs, you can with confidence decide either to adopt or reject based on a solid understanding of the technologies as well as your business needs.

### **ICTs for your business**

Your choice of which ICTs to consider depends on your type of business and your individual needs. This choice will probably be substantially different to the choice of another business. This is as it should be.

To consider which ICTs have potential for you, let's take a quick tour of some of the major items and what they have to offer your business. Please note that this summary includes the often-overlooked 'low-tech' basics as well as the more high-tech solutions such as Internet and email.

### **1.2. How this module will help you and your business**

Later in this module, you will undertake a "Needs Analysis". Put simply, this means that you will examine what your and your business needs are, so you can focus on the issues which are most important and relevant to you.

These are some key questions that you should ask to yourself when considering which types of ICTs have potential for your business. This will ensure that you are focused on ICT serving your business needs, and not the other way around!

## 1. Reducing Costs and increasing Productivity

Which part(s) of your business might benefit from ICTs (Information and Communications Technologies) to help you reduce costs or increase productivity?

Examples of these aspects of your business might include:

- Communicating with your supplier(s)
- Reducing overheads (travel, postage, communications) by using email
- Managing your finances online
- Reducing spending on outsourcing by learning how to write, print, manage a web site etc.
- Allowing you to work more flexibly - e.g. do some parts of your work from home.
- Sourcing new suppliers and services
- Sourcing partners to outsource non-core business activities
- Getting information such as weather, exchange rates and prices.

## 2. Customer Service

Has ICT any potential to help you communicate better with your customers?

Examples of these aspects of your business might include:

- Maintaining a list of customers with contact details

- Notifying existing customers of special offers to existing customers via post or email
- Maintaining personal touch with valued customers.
- Rewarding customers for referring new business

### **3. Considering Costs:**

If you start to use ICTs, what implications might this have for your time, your training needs or the needs of your staff/co-workers?

Examples of these aspects of your business might include:

- Costing equipment such as fax, computer, internet connection, other technologies
- Training costs, or sourcing grants or local assistance
- Time spent on learning new work practices or using ICT to adapt existing practices
- Delivery costs of products ordered through a web site.

### **4. Sales and Marketing:**

Is there potential in your business to find, communicate with or perhaps even sell to new customers? If so, where, how and how much will such marketing and advertising cost and what are your potential gains? Is this therefore a sound investment of your time and money?

Also, can you learn and improve on what your competitors are doing, and thus make a better offering of your product(s) and service(s) to the market? Are you aware that you customers can also use technology to compare your products and prices with that of your competitors?

Examples of these aspects of your business might include:

- Running a marketing campaign with special offers
- Investigating how competitors operate by viewing their web sites
- Expanding your range of products or services or adapting them to suit an international market
- Investigating competitors, their products and services, and their pricing
- Your business may benefit from being able to sell globally via a web site.
- Even without any sales channel, a web site may give customers product, services and contact information without taking up your time answering a letter or the phone.
- Using an online auction such as e-Bay to provide an additional sales channel for your product or service.
- Having a monthly newsletter to keep customers and the public up to date about your products.
- Having sales and promotion materials available online 24/7

## **5. Specific Skills**

Throughout this module, you will see how ICT can be used to support your day-to-day business processes with special attention to use of the Internet. You will be shown the steps involved by way of tutorial as well as finding out where to access further information for these tasks.

### 1.3. Broader Benefits of using ICTs

As well as the business benefits above, learning to use ICTs can also enrich your personal and social life. The following are some possible examples.

#### Personal Benefits:

- Become more confident about discussing ICT issues
- Keep in touch with friends and relatives abroad through email and chat rooms
- Use the Internet to research, learn or entertain
- ICTs are not ageist, racist or gender biased.
- Find information on your interests (cooking, knitting, literature, education, etc)

#### Community Benefits

- Maintain local ties using regular email
- Access to flexible and life-long learning opportunities (formal and informal)
- ICTs can foster and support social inclusion
- Communities training together can strengthen local friendships and cooperation.

And finally a Success Story, how the Internet helped to turn a farm into an eco-tourism and eco-industry business:

Ea Velsvebel and her husband Stephen Greenwood took over a small rural farm in Estonia in 2004. Agricultural production was not sufficient to

make a living. So they started an alternative business: soap making with ecological ingredients. The products are offered and sold directly to visitors, but also are promoted to “Green” and Eco-Shops all over Europe. Using technology has allowed them to:

- Advertise their products globally via a web site
- Deal with queries and orders more efficiently
- Use email to develop customer relations and repeat business
- Design and print their own colour brochures and business cards

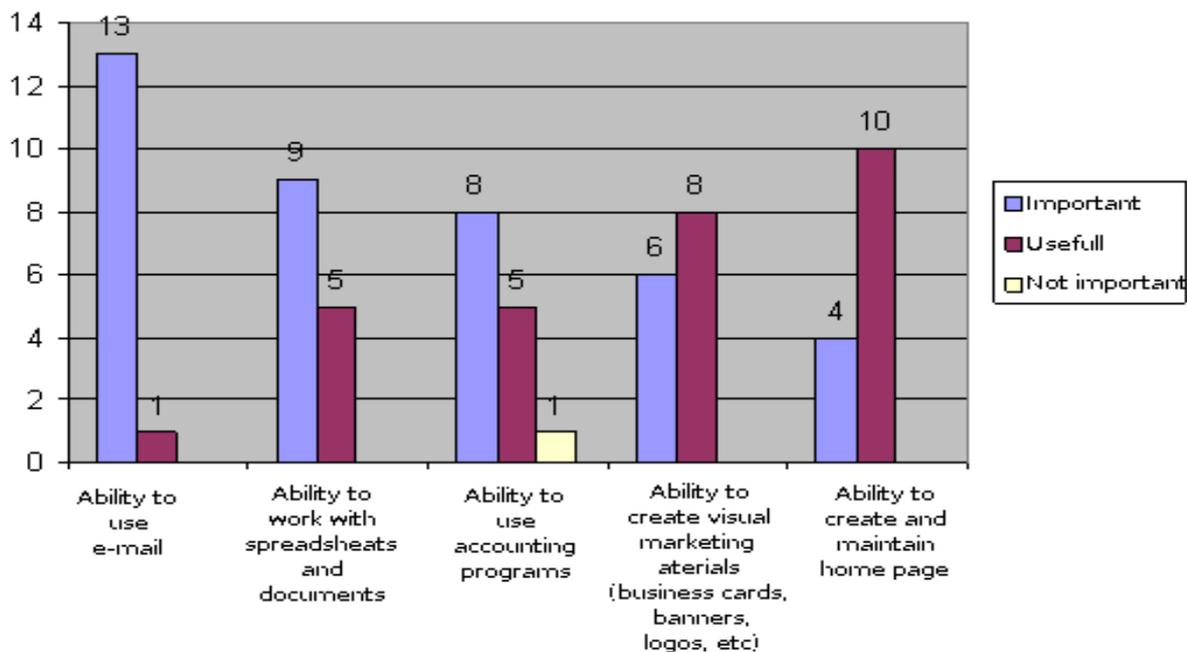
MODULE	ITC SKILLS AND INTERNET
UNIT	OPPORTUNITIES TO USE ICT IN RURAL TOURISM
LESSON	1 <b>2</b> 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

<b>UNIT 2</b>	<b>2. OPPORTUNITIES TO USE ICT IN RURAL TOURISM</b>	<b>12</b>
	2.1. E-MAIL	13
	2.2. OFFICE PROGRAM PACKAGES – A OVERVIEW	16
	2.3. MARKETING AND VISUAL ADVERTISING MATERIALS	16
	2.4. COMPUTERISED BOOKKEEPING AND MANAGEMENT	18
	2.5. ONLINE PAYMENTS – USING INTERNET BANKING	20
	2.6. SETTING UP AND MAINTAINING YOUR OWN INTERNET HOMEPAGE	22

## 2. OPPORTUNITIES TO USE ICT IN RURAL TOURISM

Owners of accommodations increasingly understand the advantages of using ICT in marketing processes. In this chapter, we shall review the most important of these advantages, focusing on the views of owners in this regard. Three years ago, a representative sample of business owners in rural tourism was interviewed to learn their views about the opportunities which ICT offers today. Respondents were asked to list skills which are fundamental, useful or unimportant for a businessperson who wishes to launch successful commercial operations in rural tourism.

The survey provided the following results:



### 1. Skills necessary in rural tourism

The main conclusions from Figure 1 are that owners feel that the most important skill is to handle E-mail, while the ability to prepare simple documents and tables is in second place. Respondents also think that the ability to handle bookkeeping and to produce visual materials is also important or at least useful. The ability to maintain a homepage on the Internet is seen more often as only useful, but as the role of E-commerce increases in business, we can expect that accommodation owners and managers will quickly change their mind about this.

### **2.1. E-mail**

E-mail ensures fast, effective and inexpensive communications with clients. E-mail also makes it possible to receive professional news and information and to apply these in everyday operations and marketing. E-mail does not require a permanent Internet connection – dial-up is enough. This can be provided via a fixed telephone line or a mobile phone at this time. E-mail is becoming more and more important in receiving reservations from travel agencies and clients, particularly if the target audience for the accommodation is foreign guests. It must be taken into account, however, that if an owner offers an E-mail address, then the mailbox must be checked at least once a day, and the owner must be able to answer the E-mails that have been received within 24 or, at most, 48 hours.

There are lots of opportunities to open up an E-mail mailbox, both free and for a fee. People who contract an Internet connection usually get one or more E-mail addresses for free. The problem appears when you

change the Internet access provider: these mailboxes will no longer be available for you.

A second option is to register one's own Internet domain, complete with E-mail boxes. The domain [www.routes2.sk](http://www.routes2.sk) for instance, could have an E-mail address [info@routes2.sk](mailto:info@routes2.sk). Most Internet providers offer nowadays the registration of a domain name and have ready packages available that include hosting of this domain, some web space, and several email addresses. The registered name will belong to you, and if you decide to change your Internet provider, you can take it with you, either for free or for a small additional fee.

**Free E-mail addresses** are the third choice. This option is very popular with users that need to have access to their email from different points,

Free in Slovakia	Notes	Parameters
<a href="http://www.post.sk">www.post.sk</a>	Free server belonging to Petit Press, a.s.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ 3 Gb and more</li> <li>◆ Online registration</li> </ul>
<a href="http://www.centrum.sk">www.centrum.sk</a>	Free server owned by Centrum Holdings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Online registration</li> <li>◆ 2 Gb</li> </ul>
Otherwise, Gmail is mostly used in Slovakia as free email service ( <i>see next</i> )		
<b>Free international</b>		
<a href="http://www.gmail.com">www.gmail.com</a>	Free server belonging to Google	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ 2 Gb</li> <li>◆ Online registration at <a href="http://www.gmail.com">www.gmail.com</a></li> <li>◆ Web mail</li> <li>◆ Free POP3 access</li> </ul>
<a href="http://www.hotmail.com">www.hotmail.com</a>	Server belonging to MSN (Microsoft Network)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ 25 Mb (250 Mb)</li> <li>◆ Web interface</li> </ul>
Many other free email services are available in almost all countries of the world – some are national or language-bound (for example @mail.ru)		

for example from office, mobile phone, and internet cafés: the so-called Webmail where all received and sent messages are stored at a distant (“remote”) Email server, not in your local PC or laptop: to read or write emails, you need to be connected to internet.

Choosing a server abroad will provide for great stability of the service. In most of the bigger international services, interfaces are available in all the official languages of the European Union. National or small providers may be limited to only a couple of languages

At present, **gmail.com** provided by the Google is very popular. The service is stable and prevents from SPAM and virus – a service that you will have to pay extra if you use your own domain email. It allows working online, but also through a normal Email program installed on your PC, like Outlook Express, Thunderbird, Eudora, etc. The web interface is available in a large number of the world’s languages, including Slovak.



**2. Gmail mail web interface example in English, but many other languages available**

## 2.2. Office program packages – an overview

If a company wants to grow and develop, it is necessary to process and prepare computerised documents, to work with electronic tables, to prepare bills and accountancy, etc. These skills also help in preparing informational materials, price sheets, etc. Precise and visually pleasant written information can be prepared for clients and partners. Any computerised document will look better and leave a greater impression on clients in terms of the trustworthiness and qualifications of the company than will a hand-written document. Also, computerised documents can be edited more easily, and that helps people to save time. In near future, electronic signature and electronic invoices will make paper obsolete in many business transactions or dealing with the public administration.

The best known office programme for work with documents and tables is **Microsoft Office**, but depending on its configuration, it can cost anywhere from 150 – 450 EUR or more. That is a big amount of money, particularly for start-up companies. A good and free alternative is **OpenOffice** ([www.openoffice.org](http://www.openoffice.org)), which can handle most documents written in Microsoft Office format as well. Unless you have to deal with complicated MS Excel or Word documents, OpenOffice can be a very good alternative to MS Office.

## 2.3. Marketing and visual advertising materials

Greater skills in working with a computer will allow you to produce your own visual marketing materials – business cards, advertisements, advertising pages, special offers, cards, etc. You want easy recognition of

your business at first sight? - develop a logo and a special font for your letters and brochures. Produce your own adverts; you will save money that would otherwise need to be spent on advertising experts from other companies. For small quantities, you may even print yourself with a good quality laser printer.

Learn how to use a program on your PC that can do all this for you, it will make you save a lot of money. You avoid spending money on design, printing and/or copying of materials for each specific case. This is all the more important because the offer in the field of rural tourism is always changing and expanding. Your contact information can change – you may add a homepage or have a new E-mail address, any pre-prepared materials would then become useless. You could, of course, scratch out the old information and write in the new information by hand, but how does that look? Rural accommodations are small businesses, and they don't need very specific design elements. The design has to be simple enough for the owner to use. Remember, of course, that this is a process which will require the owner to spend some time on it.

Professional software for printed works and advertising materials is fairly expensive and complicated – it is not needed for simple applications. There are several kinds of free software for processing of photographs.

Site	Description
<a href="http://www.xnview.com">http://www.xnview.com</a>	Software to convert images and change their size, but not to edit images
<a href="http://www.gimp.org">http://www.gimp.org</a>	Software to edit images – very many functions, but comparatively difficult to learn

The aforementioned programs such as Microsoft Office or OpenOffice also includes simple image processing functions and prepared templates for very varied design purposes. They can be used for business cards, brochures, and other basic advertising materials.

If you plan to produce larger print works, you're probably going to have to find a professional layout artist and a printing company. Frequently they work together – it is always easier and quicker to deal with one professional who is in charge of the whole process. Don't be afraid of high costs: to design and print 1500 brochures of typical design (printed on A 4 with two folds, full colour) should not cost more than 5-700 EUR. But be aware – once printed, you cannot change anything. Nowadays internet publicity is a lot more flexible and easy (we will look at this later).

## **2.4. Computerised bookkeeping and management**

The ability to handle basic bookkeeping in your computer doesn't mean that you necessarily need bookkeeping software. You can simply use your electronic table ("Spreadsheet") that comes with all office software packages for simple registration of data. The same program allows creating a reservation calendar, a list of clients, a source for statistical information, etc. This will help you in marketing and in planning.

Collecting such data in the computer will allow you easily to calculate your successes or losses in the specific year, comparing these to data from other years, etc. A reservation calendar in the computer will allow you to maintain more extensive information about each client, supplementing it with notes, personal data, payment forms, requests for supplementary services, etc. By correlating this information at year's end, you can plan

your company's development, as well as trends in terms of client demands. If you just use written records and your own memory, the statistics will always be more subjective, tedious to evaluate, and the total information will not be as complete. If you prepare bookkeeping documents in the computer, you can plan sections in which data are recorded – ones which help to provide information about your company's development.

Special **bookkeeping programs** for the PC are an interesting solution. Depending on the country, tax legislation will oblige you to do bookkeeping in a predetermined way. For small businesses – as is the case usually in rural tourism – there ought to be simplified methods that do not really require using such a specific PC program for bookkeeping: frequently, records need to be kept just at the level listing payments and receipts.

But once you use one of these programs, you will understand why we still recommend them. In a simple and intuitive way, they do all tasks that you would normally have to define yourself. If you have a business that is obliged to keep specific rules for bookkeeping, they are prepared for it and you do not have to care much more than introducing the correct data. Frequently, they include a wide range of evaluations and statistics that can help you analyse how your business is going. And they are cheap: for about 20-30 EUR you can already find simple but sufficient programs that are sufficient for a restaurant, B&B, self-catering, or even a small hotel. If you need to run bookkeeping at more professional level, prices for an annual licence start at about 90-100 EUR.

## 2.5. Online payments – using internet banking

Almost all biggest banks offer internet banking, usually, as a free service for individual clients or for the SOHO (small office – home office) size of businesses, as is the case usually in rural tourism. More complex „Business versions“ provide more convenient options when large numbers of payments have to be processed. For purposes of a small rural tourism operation, the standard version of internet banking offered by your bank will be quite sufficient. All you need is an internet access and a browser on your computer. Ask your bank about the registration conditions. Below are some links to internet banking information pages of the biggest banks in Slovakia:

<https://moja.tatrabanka.sk/ibanking/demo/ib/>

[http://www.unicreditbank.sk/index.php?www=auth\\_ibanking](http://www.unicreditbank.sk/index.php?www=auth_ibanking)

*(online demo versions available, where you can try and see how internetbanking works)*

[http://www.dexia.sk/www/home.nsf/s/inte\\_bank](http://www.dexia.sk/www/home.nsf/s/inte_bank)

Each one would have specific features, but all internet banking services make payment processing considerably easier through the following options:

- Regular payments are settled automatically
- Standard templates for popular payment types: electricity, phone bills, etc.
- List account movements per specified time period – useful for accounting

- Search payments by titles, recipients, dates, etc.
- Have direct access to supporting documents (transfer orders, payments received etc.) to account movements, sometimes directly from the list of movements
- Control all your bank accounts (credit, credit cards, current accounts) at the same time

There is a tendency to apply lower banking costs to internet banking transactions, and this trend is expected to increase along with labour costs as the banks prefer electronic payment transactions. More to that, internet banking will save your time for reaching the nearest bank office, which in rural areas may sometimes be quite distant. And online banking is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year; so you can easily “go to the bank” at night or early in the morning when your normal office would be closed.



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### 3. Hanzanet Internet banking demo program

## 2.6. Setting up and maintaining your own Internet homepage

Designing your own homepage – that means either doing it yourself or finding a specialist who will do it for you, but that’s just one part of the mix. You also have to update the homepage regularly to keep it current. The importance and trustworthiness of a homepage in the eyes of a client rests not only in the presentation of contact information, but also in the offer of timely information about the latest offers, prices, etc. This means that clients can make choices. There are lots of opportunities to design and maintain homepages today. If they are kept fairly simple, then they are not too expensive, either.

The first problem – when to update information, and which information is to be updated? If you’re going to do that, you’ll have to be able to access the structure of the homepage and change the information yourself. These can be fairly expensive functions if you need to bring in a specialist again – more expensive than the design of the original homepage.

There are now many easy and cost-effective ways for having a homepage:

- Internet access providers may include tools to create your page to be published under their domain: it will have the address [www.yourpage.providerdomain.com](http://www.yourpage.providerdomain.com) or similar. These tools are generic, meant for any kind of homepage, and sometimes do not allow to adapt to the needs of a tourism service. But they may be worth a try for the beginning.
- You can generate a webpage for free at Google Sites: <http://www.google.com/sites/help/intl/en/overview.html>  
In order to use this possibility, you first need to register as user – this can be done for example creating you a Gmail email account at <https://www.google.com/accounts/NewAccount>

- Most internet providers offer the use of a website design program for free if you host your domain with them. The use of this program is usually easy, and it allows creating pretty complex web pages even in several languages. But have a close look at the technical conditions: the webpage will appear under your own domain name as long as you remain with this specific hosting service, but frequently you cannot “take it with you” if you decide to change to another provider.
- The same programs that are offered for free use by these internet providers are also available at our own PC – many of them are very cheap or even free of charge. To use them requires a bit of training, though some are now available especially adapted for tourism SSMEs. As a rule, you may consider that the cheap or free versions require higher technical knowledge from your side, while more elaborated offers are simple to use but can cost up to 150 EUR or even more.

Whatever solution to decide to use, there are many suggestions and rules about how to design your homepage. We will learn about them in more detail in UNIT 8



MODULE

ITC SKILLS AND INTERNET

UNIT

EQUIPMENTS THAT YOU SHOULD HAVE

LESSON

 1 2 **3** 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

**UNIT 3**
**3. EQUIPMENT THAT YOU SHOULD HAVE**
**26**

3.1. ICT OFFICE EQUIPMENT

26

*The Computer*

26

*The peripheral equipment*

28

3.2. SOFTWARE PROGRAMS

31

*Operating System*

31

*Office programs*

32

*Accountancy and business management*

38

3.3. HOW TO CONNECT TO THE INTERNET

40

3.4. INTERNET ACCESS – WHAT DO YOU NEED

43

*Technical equipment*

43

## 3. EQUIPMENT THAT YOU SHOULD HAVE

In the last units, you got a general vision about the different uses that ICT can have for rural tourism providers, based on the most frequent needs.

In the following units, we will deal with most of them in more detail and from a practical point of view.

### 3.1. ICT office equipment

In order to make proper use of the ICT and obtain all possible benefits from them, you need to have at your disposal a minimum of technical infrastructure.

#### The Computer

This is the heart of all ICT use. Traditionally, it was equivalent to have a PC – Personal Computer with fixed installation at the working desk. But over the last years, the use of portable computers (“laptops”) is becoming more popular – many of them offer similar capacities and equipments as the PCs but you can take them with you when and wherever you want.

Whatever solution you decide, be cost-effective: for office use, no high-end processor, graphic card, or huge disk space is needed. Have a look at any office around you, even when they are specialized in accountancy or business administration: they still use equipment 4-5 years old and it does the job perfectly. So don't spend too much on your computer, if

you buy a new one just for office use, usually the most economic model that you can find is sufficient.

To assure a smooth running of your computer and comfortable work with it, some more suggestions that you should consider when you buy:

- Be sure that the Operating System is included. Most new PC and laptops come with Windows Vista which is OK, but if you can get the previous version (Windows XP) this is also fine as it is considered more stable. Some cheap PC and laptops come with Linux instead of Windows – this may be fully functional if you are IT specialist, but is not really an option for 98% of office users. *Find more details further below in this unit.*
- Memory should be at least 1 Gigabyte (GB) for running Windows XP, and 2 GB for Vista. If the basic model has less, extending memory costs little extra but helps a lot when working.
- Look out for “all-in-one” equipments that integrate at least the following: network connector, 4-6 USB connectors, DVD-reader, and graphic card or onboard-chip. Low-cost PCs and laptops usually have all this integrated on the motherboard of the PC, which is preferable.
- If you will connect to internet through a normal telephone line, you additionally need a modem. This used to be standard in laptops, but some do not have it any more so have a look at this criterion.
- The monitor may or not be included in the price of a new PC (laptops have it by default). To use a good monitor is more important for comfortable work than the processing power of the PC itself. For office work, the resolution should be 1280 x 1080 or higher - you can connect any old monitor that you may have from a previous PC if it is not older than 6-7 years. If you buy a new flat screen, look for 20” or 22” models with a resolution of 1680 x 1280 or similar: this is state of art, the extra cost over smaller models is little but you will note the difference when working with it.

## The peripheral equipment

The computer alone will be fine for direct work and data processing. But in order to communicate with the outside world and to obtain physical documents, you need to connect several additional elements.

### Printer

Printers are available in all possible varieties, sizes, and price levels. For office use, a standard black-and-white laser printer will do perfectly; if you need to print colored documents, the choice is an ink injection printer.

Prices start at very low levels – you may get a simple ink printer for less than 40 EUR. The surprise comes after a couple of days, when the ink tank(s) are empty and you need to buy new ones: a full set (three colors plus black) can easily cost more than you paid for the printer. So what should you really look at?

The criterion is the printing cost per page (pcp), which is the sum of ink (or toner) + paper + depreciation of the price of the printer itself. You will need to search on the internet to find these values for different printer companies and models: the producers themselves do not usually announce them. Some tentative values for PCP that may help you to decide which printer is best for you:

- b/w laser printers                      3-5 cents per page
- color laser printers                    14-22 cents per page
- colour ink printers                    6-12 cents per page

These values are valid for medium quality printers that cost around 100-150 EUR (ink) or 200 EUR (color laser). Low-cost models may be a choice

only if you print very little as otherwise, the cost for restocking ink or toner is a lot higher than with the more expensive models.

### **Scanner**

A scanner allows you to copy from printed documents to electronic format: photos, texts, books, invoices, etc. It is easy to handle, and for office use any low-cost model is sufficient. If you need to scan at higher quality (e.g. images for printing), the scan resolution must be at least 300 x 300 at 24 bits (32 is better but not necessary). Most models nowadays offer these minimums at technical level, but the quality of color reproduction usually still improves with the price of the device.

### **Multi-functional devices**

These devices combine printer and scanner, thus they can additionally be used for making smaller amounts of photocopies. Some also include a fax modem, in this case you can send faxes as usual with a printed original, or send a fax directly from the PC. All other remarks made about printers and scanners apply to the multi-functional devices as well. Compared to the sum of individual purchase of printer and scanner, there is not much price difference and the decision depends more on practical reasons (space, ease of use, and quality of the components).

### **UPS – Uninterrupted Power Supply**

This device is very useful if you live in rural areas where the electricity supply is unstable. An UPS, basically, is a big battery that is connected between the normal electricity plug in the wall and your computer. In case of power cuts, it still provides sufficient power for about 5-10 minutes,

enough to close down the PC safely without the risk of losing data. Most UPS nowadays come even with special software that closes down the PC unattended in case you are not present when a power cut occurs. Prices are not cheap, a basic UPS with sufficient power to keep a PC, monitor, ADSL modem, and some other smaller device running for some 5-10 minutes will cost at least 100 EUR but more powerful models are twice that much. Still, if you suffer frequent electricity power cuts, it is a worthwhile investment.

### **Local Network**

This is relevant if you use several PC that need to exchange information. It also allows you share devices such as a printer, scanner, or internet access between several PC and laptops.

You have two alternatives for setting up a local network (professionally called "LAN" from "local area network"):

- LAN with physical (cabled) connection between the PCs. This is the traditional way and still the fastest and most reliable one. Your PC or laptop already has a network connector, what you additionally need is a "router": a small device that allows connecting several PC, laptop, or any other device with network capability into one LAN.
- W-LAN (wireless LAN). In this version, the connection between equipments is through radio waves (without cable = "wireless"). You need a WLAN router or wireless access point – usually the WLAN routers have also plugs for the traditional LAN concept and allow combining both in the same installation.

Whenever possible, we recommend use and install a traditional LAN with cabled connection: it is far more reliable and faster than the wireless

option. When thinking about installing a LAN in your tourist service, nevertheless always use combined WLAN-LAN-device: this way you can always connect also with your own laptop. And in case you have a connection to the internet, you will be able to offer this service also to your clients. Many internet access providers nowadays offer such a WLAN router for free when you make the contract, so it is not really a matter of cost anymore.

### **Internet connection**

The minimum equipment to connect to the Internet is an analogical modem (usually a fax-modem card for the PC) that works with a normal telephone line. If the connection is broadband (DSL lines), you will need a DSL modem and a network connection plug in your PC.

These equipments and further details will be presented with further down in point 3.4

## **3.2. Software programs**

Some basic information about software programs for ICT in office or small business use was already provided in the previous chapters. The following lines are still a summary, but extending many details.

### **Operating System**

The Operating System is basic software that allows your PC to start, run, and do what you want in an easy and intuitive way. As per today, for inexperienced users that need a reliable system that is able to exchange

information and data with other PCs around the world, the only realistic options are provided by the Microsoft Windows family:

- **Windows XP** – this is no longer officially sold, but if you have it running or even can still get it installed, it is the best recommendation
- **Windows Vista** – the successor of XP, but with quite a lot of problems and a higher need of resources such as processor and memory to run smoothly.

Both frequently come already pre-installed when you buy a new computer or laptop. Otherwise you will have to buy a license, which may cost from 150 – 350 EUR depending on the version.

For experienced users, any of the **Linux**-based systems are an alternative. All of them are free, as is related software, but you must be aware that the compatibility of generated files with the Microsoft world is not that simple and easy as many defenders of Linux will make you believe. As well, support for Linux is difficult if you find any problems running it unless you are an informatics freak.

In other words: you will need a version of Windows sooner or later – so better use it from the beginning.

## **Office programs**

We already commented briefly in the previous unit on the Office program packages that are available. In more detail, all relevant alternatives are composed of several sub-programs as follows:

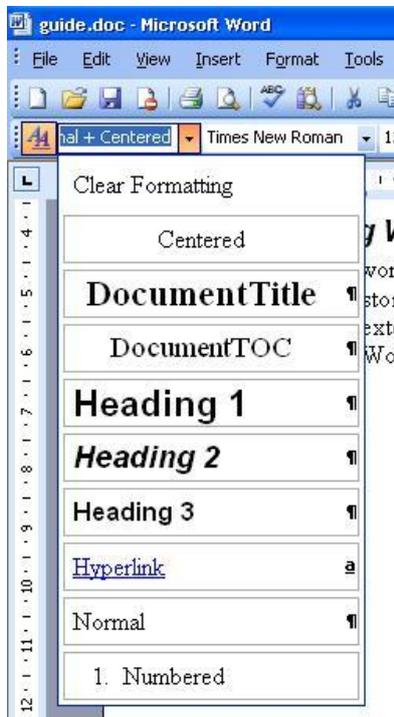
## **Text processor**

This is a program that allows you write letters, articles, invoices, or even books or teaching materials like this one. You will be astonished by all the functionalities that these programs offer, most users do not even use 10% of them (but still pay them). There are many good books available on Microsoft Office and a few also on Open Office, as well as many good online tutorials and of course help files provided with the programs.

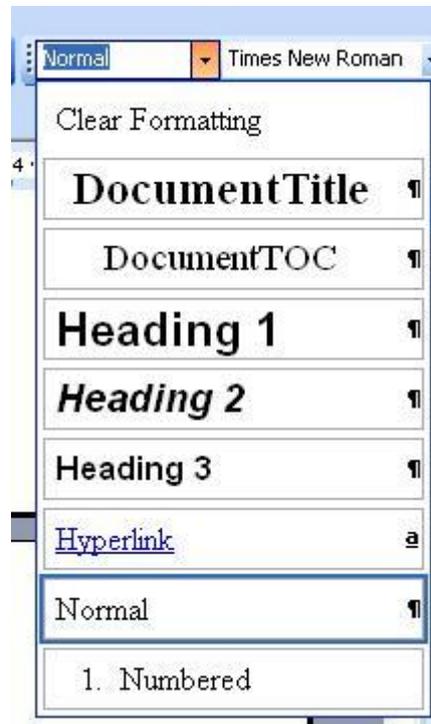
While explaining all their capacities would fill a whole book, may we recommend you learning more about one specific feature that is very useful for creating your own corporate design such as letters, invoices, or brochures:

### **Working with documents – use styles!**

Most users start with a white sheet when preparing a new document, defining new fonts, margins, and spacing, ... over again and again each time. Especially for office work (letters, reports, brochures), a unified image is very important – this is why we recommend you to set up and use complete styles instead of individual fonts, font sizes, typefaces, etc. Styles are special predefined elements in MS Word, Open Office, and most other text processors which can be used to format your document. For example, if you use Heading1, Heading2, Heading3 styles in your document, then generating table of contents will be only a simple menu selection (*Insert -> Reference->Index and Tables->Table of Contents*). Changing appearance of all your headers from non-numbered to numbered is also just a change in style settings.



**4. Style toolbar dropdown**



**5. Style selection sidebar**

In MS Word 2003, styles can be selected either from the toolbar or for easier navigation Word sidebar can be used. When using the sidebar, the most convenient selection mode is Show → "Available styles"

### **Electronic calculation sheets / "Spreadsheets"**

These programs are very useful for preparing any kind of report that requires calculation of values or easy graphic presentation of data. Their big advantage the facility for quick calculation of very complex relations of data – for example:

- Summing, resting, dividing or multiplying by rows, files, or individual fields that can be defined by the user
- Complex mathematical or statistical operations
- Filters that only take into consideration data sets which comply with specific selection criteria
- Update of any results after changing one value in the calculation, with just a simple click
- Combination of all the above calculations in a nice graphic design that may include explanations, headings, or even pictures and logos.

While a bit complicated to use at the first time, once you learn to operate with them they are great help for any administrative work that includes repetitive calculations: simple bookkeeping, calculation of budgets, control of occupancy and revenue, etc.

The most known is EXCEL as part of the Microsoft Office suite; other suites have similar programs included.

### **Presentations**

Text processors are for preparing texts, while spreadsheets are ideal where calculated data are involved. But when you want to present information in an easy and entertaining way, you will need a different approach: this is covered by the presentation programs. They allow to combine text, graphics, pictures, or even sound and video in one file.

Their most frequent use is related with speeches, teaching, or any other occasion where spoken word is to be supported by a summarized visual presentation. Nevertheless, for rural tourism services they are an

excellent solution to prepare an electronic showcase or brochure: all these programs allow you to create a self-running version that can be sent to your clients, or put online for download at your website.

You will certainly have heard about the most extended of these programs: **PowerPoint** from the Microsoft Office suite. The other suites have similar programs included, most of them are compatible with PowerPoint at least for simple presentations.

### **Data base**

Spreadsheet usually will do the job for small rural tourism enterprises very well. But if you need to operate with higher amount of data, the use of the data bases should be considered. They are a lot less intuitive as spreadsheets, but in turn they allow managing huge and complex sets of information that a spreadsheet would not be able to manage.

Data base programs are included by default in suites such as OpenOffice, while in the commercial versions of Microsoft or Corel they are only available in the more expensive "professional" versions. Due to their high complexity, some data base programs are available as stand-alone applications, such is the case of Dbase or MySQL.

### **Other programs included in Office packages**

Depending on the package, you will find additional programs that cover more specific tasks such as email, basic web design, note block, videoconferencing, editor for mathematic formula, and others.

See also the following comparison chart:

Name	Microsoft Office 2007	Open Office 3.0	Corel Office X4
Text processor	WORD	Writer	WordPerfect
Spreadsheet	Excel	Calc	QuattroPro
Presentation	PowerPoint	Impress	Presentations
Data base	<i>Access (optional)</i>	--	--
Email	Outlook	--	<i>MAIL (optional)</i>
Web editor	Frontpage	Editor	--
Others	--	Draw Math	Lightning (notes) Visual Analysis
Price	150 – 450 EUR, depending on the version	Free	270 EUR (new) 150 EUR (upgrade)
Observations	Sometimes bundled with new PC or laptop	--	Look for offers

#### 6. Most important content of popular office packages

Some online tutorials to make better use of office packages:

- ◆ From Microsoft:
  - <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/training/FX100565001033.aspx>
- ◆ Many others such as:
  - <http://www.uwstout.edu/training/MSTutorials/tutorials.htm>
  - Search on Google for "MS Office tutorial"
- ◆ OpenOffice tutorials:
  - <http://www.openoffice-support.net/>
  - <http://www.tutorialsforopenoffice.org/>
  - <http://www.learnopenoffice.org/index.htm>
  - Search on Google for "OpenOffice tutorial"

## **Accountancy and business management**

Accountancy programs differ widely depending on the country where you are located. In this standard English version of teaching materials, which is meant as a base for adaptation to any country, we only refer to the comments already made above.

*If this teaching material is adapted to a specific country, this part needs to be developed individually, taking in account the existing legal framework and accountancy rules that are applicable.*

## **Graphic Design**

You do not need to be an artist or specialist in graphic design to prepare your own brochures, visit cards, posters, or any other visual presentation of your services. At a more simple level, you may still want to manage photos, graphics, or even edit videos.

Don't look for professional programs in this field: they may be powerful, but are very difficult to manage and cost a high amount of money. For the basic tasks that may appear in a small rural tourism enterprise, simple programs are sufficient and many of them are either included in your Operating System, or they come bundled together with equipment such as scanners, digital cameras, or webcams. All of them "do the job" for your needs.

## **Security: Antivirus, AntiSpam, etc**

The electronic "virus" and similar threats is basically a small program that runs on your PC without your knowledge, performing actions that you

cannot control. Some of them are of destructive nature – for example, they actively try to destroy information on your PC. They may intend to obtain information about the operations on your PC in order to gain access to passwords or secret codes. Others allow remote control of your PC (“Trojans”) while you are connected to the internet, using your PC for illicit or even criminal activities such as sending SPAM emails or illegal download of files.

To fight these activities, you need to install security programs especially designed to avoid this kind of attack or infiltration of your PC. While you may find a lot of free programs that cover this task, be aware that after an evaluation period of usually 30 days they will request you to pay for an annual licence; if you refuse, some may just stop operating, others will keep going but will not update the list of dangerous virus (which means that you are not protected against new versions), or they will at least include a message in your Emails that you are using this-or-that free version of their program.

Annual licence fees for the professional solutions such as Kaspersky, Norton, AVG, etc. are around 30 EUR for one computer. Competition is strong, and after the first year at “full rate”, at future renovations you will be offered a strong discount that may even include several licences at the price of only one – for example, the renovation of Kaspersky Internet Security covers two licences instead of only one that you initially purchased.

The best way to prevent virus, “Trojans”, and SPAM is to avoid and filter them even before they reach your computer. While the internet access providers do not normally offer this, you will find a different situation when you contract a webhosting for your own website (see below): most

ISP offer antivirus either included in the annual fee that they charge you, or at a small extra amount. SPAM filters may also be available, but usually at an extra charge. Including these services in your hosting contract is a good choice if you have a fixed office installation. On the other hand, if you use a laptop that is connected at changing places, it still is preferable to install a specific antivirus and antispam program on it.

### **3.3. How to connect to the internet**

Until now, we have discussed the equipment and software that you should have for ICT use within your office. Now we will learn how to connect this local equipment with the outer world and especially, with internet, and the equipment that you will need to do this.

An Internet connection is increasingly becoming a critical factor for running a business – not only for the reason of promotion, but also to communicate quickly with your clients or use online services such as banking, tax payments, or ordering products. In the near future, even tasks such as text processing or accountancy may be done through the internet.

There is a wide range of solutions available to connect yourself to the internet, even in rural areas. Here are the most frequent choices:

- **Dial-up access.** This is the simplest solution, it is possible wherever a normal telephone line or mobile coverage is available. Speed is very low (up to 56 kbp), just sufficient for email exchange or for surfing simple web pages. It is already in disuse in urban areas where faster solutions are available, but may still be a cost-effective

choice in rural areas because connection rates are usually cheap (like a local phone call) if a landline is used. In the case of mobile connection, prices are calculated by data volume and may increase considerably.

- **DSL:** This term stands for “Digital Subscriber Line” and allows for continuous high speed access to the internet over a normal telephone cable (i.e. over the same plug you can at the same time use internet and make a normal phone call). Coverage is growing, also in rural communities, but technical restrictions make it difficult to reach remote locations. You will need a special DSL modem, which may be provided for free when you make the contract with your internet access provider. This modem connects to the PC via a network cable, but USB solutions also exist. Due to the extended use of DSL connections, look for a modem that combines with a WLAN router: this provides a complete solution to connect several PCs and laptops at the same time. For technical and pricing reasons, DSL solutions for public and small enterprises are usually “asymmetric” – this means that the speed for receiving (“downloading”) files is much higher than the speed for sending (“uploading”). Unless you need to send big files, this is perfectly sufficient.
  
- **Cable:** not usually available yet in rural areas, cable connections allow to combine through the same connection a lot of additional services such as telephone, television, video on demand, and other digital services. Speed was an argument in favour compared with DSL solution, but the difference is now only in stability and guarantee of minimum bandwidth where the cable connection still has advantages.

- **3G / HSDP modem.** This solution is entirely based on mobile broadband telephone services: no physical connection like telephone line or cable is required. The speed is comparable with DSL or cable connections. The drawback in rural areas is coverage by the 3G mobile network, which is still insufficient except close to main highways. But as happened with normal mobile coverage, this is going to improve very quickly. Rates depend on the country, in many West European countries there is almost no difference any more with DSL or cable.
  
- **Satellite or radio.** A solution that may be of interest in special cases where none of the above is possible, or if higher download speed than provided by a dial-up connection is needed. Satellite internet access at “payable” rates always require a parallel telephone connection: you only receive data via satellite while your sending is done through a (mobile or landline) standard telephone. Bi-directional satellite solutions are also available but very expensive. Radio connection requires a direct visibility between the transmitter and your reception – if this exists, it may be an interesting alternative for medium or high data volumes.

Whichever of the above solutions you may choose, you will always need to contract you access with a company that provides you the connection (be it a phone line, mobile line, or radio): the **Internet access provider**.

This is the company that really connects our PC with the internet through their data transmission infrastructure. All telephone companies offer this service to their clients either directly or through “sister companies”. Except in case of dial-up over normal telephone lines where you will pay

by connection time, the usual solution is a so-called "Flat Rate": at a fixed amount per month, the user can be connected to the internet at any time – even 24 hours a day – and without limit for data traffic. This solution is sufficient to connect to the internet as a normal user. Find listed below some of the most relevant Internet Access Providers in Slovakia:

#### Internet access providers in Slovakia:

Slovak Telekom, a. s., more information [www.t-com.sk](http://www.t-com.sk)

UPC BROADBAND SLOVAKIA, s.r.o.,  
[www.upc.sk/internet/zakladne\\_informacie](http://www.upc.sk/internet/zakladne_informacie)

GTS Slovakia, a.s. [www.gts.sk](http://www.gts.sk)

### 3.4. Internet access – what do you need

#### Technical equipment

Apart from a contract with an Internet Access Provider to connect to, and work on, the internet, you need a couple of physical devices and programs:

- **Terminal.** This is the technical name for the device that we use for working on the internet. In your case, it will be your computer or laptop; other options could include mobile PDA phones or simple "net-PCs"
- **Web browser.** It is a program installed on our terminal that allows us access to the different services that are available on the internet. The most know is **Internet Explorer** which comes bundled together

with any Microsoft operating system of the Windows family. Other choices (all of them are free for download and use):

- **Firefox** (the 2<sup>nd</sup>-most used after Microsoft IE)  
[www.mozilla-europe.org](http://www.mozilla-europe.org)
- **Safari** [www.apple.com/safari/](http://www.apple.com/safari/)
- **Opera** (very "light", runs well on old PC or PDA)  
[www.opera.com](http://www.opera.com)
- **Google Chrome**  
<http://www.google.com/chrome/index.html>

■ **Modem.** This term is generally applied to all devices that connect digital equipment such as a PC with telecommunication networks. The modem that we will need for internet depends on the type of connection that we will be using (see below):

- Dial-up access: a modem or fax-modem card to be plugged into a free slot in your PC
- DSL: a special DSL modem which is connected to the telephone jack on one side, and to the PC on the other side.
- Cable: a similar solution as DSL
- 3G / HSDP: **USB modem.**
- If you establish your own domain, website, or email accounts, you will additionally need to rent space for storage of the related files: the so-called "**Hosting**" of a website, together with other services that are included in the package. This kind of company is called "**Internet Service Provider**" (**ISP**), and must not be confused with the previously discussed Internet Access Providers.

Professional ISPs can work at a national or international level: their service is literally “online”, the computers where they operate may be anywhere on the globe and in fact, some of the bigger hosting companies distribute between servers in several countries or continents to speed up the response. The most important criteria for choosing an ISP is the attention to the customer (you) in case of problems.

ISP services usually offer you a complete package of services which includes the hosting and administration of your domain; a certain amount of space to store and run your own website; one or several email addresses; plus a lot of other optional services such as webpage design, antivirus, virtual shops, database, etc. Prices are really accessible, a simple hosting of domain, website, and email address may cost less than 2 EUR/month. Some of the most relevant ISPs in Slovakia are listed here:

Internet service and hosting providers in Slovakia:

**ACTIVE 24, s.r.o.** [www.domeny.sk](http://www.domeny.sk)

**WebHouse,s.r.o.** [www.domains.sk](http://www.domains.sk)

**ZONER, s.r.o.** [www.slovaknet.sk](http://www.slovaknet.sk)



MODULE	ITC SKILLS AND INTERNET
UNIT	INTERNET
LESSON	1 2 3 <b>4 5 6</b> 7 8 9 10 11 12

<b>UNIT 4</b>	<b>4. INTERNET</b>	<b>48</b>
	4.1. INTERNET	48
	4.2. HOW DOES IT WORK	49
	4.3. DOMAINS	50
	4.4. TYPES OF DOMAINS	52
	4.5. HOW TO DEFINE AND BUY A DOMAIN NAME	53
	4.6. INTERESTING WEBSITES	56
	<b>5. SERVICES ON INTERNET</b>	<b>57</b>
	5.1. E-MAIL	57
	<i>How to configure an Email account with Outlook Express</i>	59
	5.2. THE WORLD WIDE WEB (WWW)	60
	5.3. FTP (FILE TRANSFER PROTOCOL)	62
	5.4. WAP	65
	<b>6. INTERNET AND TOURISM</b>	<b>66</b>
	6.1. INTERNET FOR TOURISM SSMES	66
	6.2. INTERNET USE BY THE CLIENT	67
	6.3. WHY DO OUR CLIENTS USE INTERNET?	69
	6.4. HOW TO PRESENT YOUR TOURIST SERVICE ON THE INTERNET	70
	<i>Portals run by public entities</i>	71
	<i>Private portals – commercial or run by associations</i>	72

## 4. INTERNET

### 4.1. Internet

**Internet** (the short term derives from **INTER**connected **NET**works) is a worldwide connection between computers of different sizes that allows them to communicate with each other, and to share information and services all around the globe. These computers can be connected to each other through cable, fibreglass, telephone lines, mobile phones, or satellite – in the previous unit we already learned about some of them.

The most characteristic features of the Internet are:

- **Global**: Internet connects millions of computers (servers) distributed in almost all countries of the world. From any place on the globe that allows us to connect, we can immediately view and exchange messages, send or receive files, go shopping, etc.
- **Varied**: users belong to any kind of profession, nationality, belief, culture, age, corporations, and institutions, regional, national, or international organisations.
- **De-centralised**: there is no central or official control, the whole Internet is based on simple technical rules but each administrator is then responsible for his own network or computer.
- **Anonymous**: any person connecting to or using the Internet is anonymous, only a virtual address (called IP – see below) of the computer is known. This is directly related with the latter point, as it

makes the whole operating of internet easy to handle. This anonymity provides for personal intimacy, it allows free and uncensored expression of opinions. On the other hand, illegal or criminal use is also possible.

- **Without order:** in a certain way, Internet is an “organised chaos”. Except the technical rules for the structure of the Internet, all other aspects such as content, design, programming etc. are under strict responsibility of the provider. This is promotes a great creativity and flexibility in finding innovative solutions.
- **Easy to use:** everybody can make use of the Internet, without the need of special knowledge or training.

## 4.2. How does it work

All data and information that can be found on the Internet is stored (“hosted”) in computers which in turn serve this content on request to other computers – this is why they are called “servers”. These servers are connected to each other in a network. In order to generate or answer data requests and provide the adequate response, they run specially designed programs.

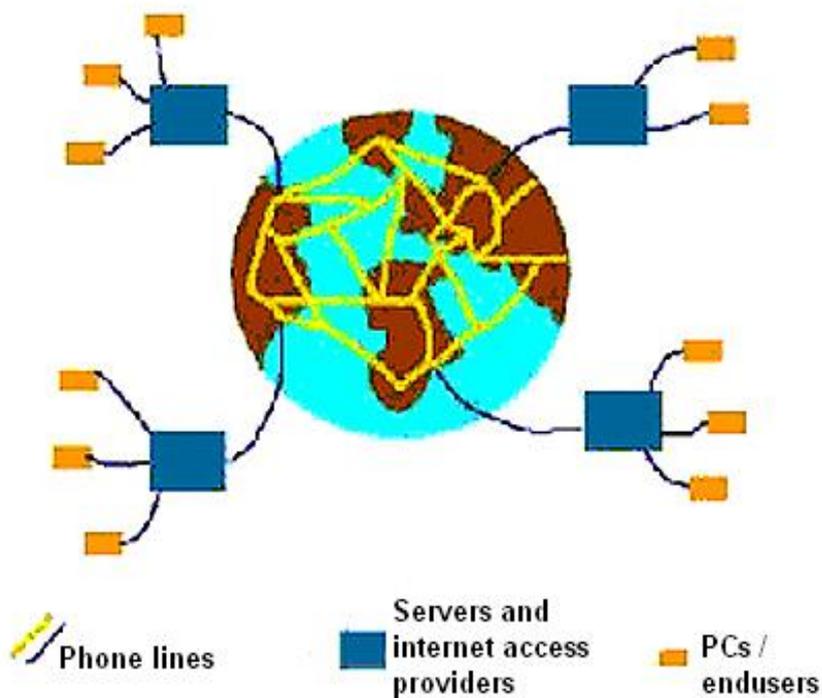
To have access from your PC to the Internet, it must first be connected to one of these servers. This connection can be established over a normal telephone line, cable, mobile connection, or satellite as we have already seen before. Your PC then forms directly part of this worldwide network: you can communicate in real time with any other user on the globe that is connected at the same time.

### Examples:

Chats

Messenger services such as MSN, Yahoo, ICQ, Skype, ...

Telephone conversations over IP (Skype)



## 7. Structure of Internet

### 4.3. Domains

Each computer that is connected to the Internet receives a unique address that exclusively refers to this specific device: it is like a passport or ID card number for your connection point. This address is called "IP" and is

composed of four blocks of numbers, usually three by three; for example, 192.168.0.110.

Similar to what happens with a telephone call or when sending a letter, in order to establish communication it is necessary to know both the sending and the receiving IP number: each application or website on the Internet needs to know this IP number of the site it wants to connect to.

It would be hard to memorize these IP numbers for more than a few websites. To overcome this problem, a special structure of names was agreed upon worldwide: the DNS – Domain Name System or in more popular languages, the **Domains**. Each domain consists of a series of words or characters that are separated by a dot. It must have at least two blocks, but up to four are possible:

#### Examples:

[vioregio.sk](http://vioregio.sk) domain of the ROUTES 2 website

[booking.com](http://booking.com) domain of the online hotel booking engine Booking

Each of these domains is assigned one unique IP number. If you search for the domain name, this name is first interpreted and translated into the corresponding IP by a specialized server, and only then the connection is established. In reality both computers communicate with each other through their respective IP addresses, but for the human user this is not visible (the term is “transparent”): we think that we are in contact with the selected domain, which is easier to remember for us than its IP address.

## 4.4. Types of domains

We just learned that a domain name is composed of at least two blocks of characters, separated with a dot. The first part is a unique name or combination of letters that we can choose freely as we like, while for the second part only allows for choosing from a limited list that are also called “domains”.

**1. - Generic domains:** these domains are available worldwide; the intention is to show at first sight the type of organisation that is represented by it. The mostly used generic domains and their use are:

<b>.com</b>	Commercial websites
<b>.edu</b>	Education or training institutions (schools, universities, ... )
<b>.org</b>	Organisations or associations, usual non-profit
<b>.biz</b>	Business websites
<b>.name</b>	Domain for personal use, it allows to create a domain with your own name (e.g. john.peter.<name>)
<b>.museum</b>	Reserved for museums
<b>.coop</b>	Reserved for cooperatives
<b>.pro</b>	Reserved for professionals
<b>.eu</b>	Institutions or companies that work Europe-wide

All domain names are regulated and registered worldwide. This is necessary because each domain name – just like a telephone number - may exist only once to assure the correct connection. These names are managed under a hierarchy headed by the [Internet Assigned Numbers](#)

[Authority](#) (IANA), which manages the top of the DNS tree by administrating the data in the [root nameservers](#). IANA delegates all other domain name authority to private or public domain name registries, such as [VeriSign](#). A list of all accredited domain name registrars can be found at <http://www.icann.org/registrars/accredited-list.html>

**2. - Country code domains:** they indicate the country of origin or where the holder of the domain is located, using the international [ISO codes](#) such

as	<b>es</b>	Spain
	<b>fr</b>	France
	<b>sk</b>	Slovakia

These are called [country code top-level domains](#) (ccTLD) and their administration is delegated by IANA to national registries such as [DENIC](#) in Germany, or [Nominet](#) in the United Kingdom. To find out about the requirements that you need to fulfil in order to buy any of these country domains, contact with these national registries because rules may vary from country to country. One requisite that will always appear, is that your company or personal residence must be located in the same country as the country code: for example, a company from France will not be able to register such a domain for Spain (.es) unless it has a formally established office or branch there.

#### **4.5. How to define and buy a domain name**

To have our own domain is necessary if you want to set up an independent website for your business. It helps you to promote it more efficiently, and it gives you a proper professional identity in the eyes of your customers.

The name that you chose is very important, it will be like the visible cardboard on the doorstep of your business on the Internet. When picking a domain name, [think about the following:](#)

#### ■ **What is your site about?**

When choosing your domain name keep in mind what your domain name is going to be about. Your domain name is like the title of your web site. So your domain name should be whatever you will be putting at the top of your web site.

#### ■ **Business Domains**

If you are registering a domain name for a business you should obviously try registering the name of the company. You may also try to register a name that describes your type of business.

#### ■ **Personal Domains**

If you are registering a domain name for your own personal site or blog, you can try and register your first and last name.

#### ■ **Keep it Simple**

The best domain names are short and sweet. While you can register a domain name that is up to 67 characters long, shorter domain names are usually more desirable.

#### ■ **Make it Memorable**

Make sure that it's a name that will stick. Ask yourself, "If I told someone my email address at this domain name would they remember it?"

Each domain name may only exist once on the world. This is why you cannot just establish any name you like. Once you have thought about the domain name that you would like to have, find out if it still available. This can be done looking at websites such as

<http://www.internic.net/whois.html>

<http://www.uwhois.com/cgi/domains.cgi?User=NoAds>

[www.whois.com](http://www.whois.com)

If the name is already taken, depending on the site you will nevertheless be presented with alternative names or domains where this name is still available. For example, the combination "*pineforestfarm.com*" may be taken, while "*pineforestfarm.biz*" is still available.

Probably the easiest solution is using the websites of Internet Service Providers (ISP) where you plan to host your future website. Most of them offer such a domain name search service for free, in the hope that you will later purchase the hosting with them.

If your domain names is available, you need to **register** and buy (more exactly: **rent**) it for a certain time. You will also need to rent a certain disk space with an ISP for storing ("hosting") your website, emails, or any other files that you want to be accessible on the internet.

Cost for such a registration and hosting of a domain starts at about 12 – 18 EUR per year as of March 2009. You may register your domain first and then rent the hosting separately, but this solution is not recommendable: most ISP will include the initial registration and rent of your domain in the price of their web hosting packages. Not only does this save you time and effort, it also assures that you do not loose your

domain when it expires because the hosting ISP will take care about renovation in time.

Prices are very reasonable, for example international providers such as AMEN offer a two-year-package that includes domain name reservation, space for webpage, and one email address at 24 EUR (as per March 2009). But have a look at different providers and compare prices – values may vary considerably: we tried with several ISP and found differences between 24 EUR to 60 EUR for the same service!

#### **4.6. Interesting websites**

*If this teaching material is adapted to a specific country, this part needs to be developed individually.*

## 5. SERVICES ON INTERNET

### 5.1. E-mail

Electronic mail (Email) is one of the most popular services based on the Internet. Using Email, you can send a letter, a document, images, files, or any other attachment with almost immediate reception by the destination even if he is located on the other side of the globe. The only equipment required is a PC or any other terminal device that is connected to the internet, and two Email addresses to send and receive.

Basically there is little difference in how Email Works compared with the traditional surface mail (also called "snail mail" by Internet users). Both the sender and the destination need a valid address from and to where to send their mail. Once the message is written, you just need to indicate the address it has to be delivered to, and your own address to identify you.

Three basic elements are involved when sending and receiving Email:

- **Email client.** This provides the visual interface that allow to write or read Emails and store, resend, or forward them. Most such programs also include an address book where you can manage your contacts. This program can be installed on your PC like Outlook Express or Thunderbird; or it can be available online for working with it remotely ("webmail").
- **Mail Server.** A special program installed on a computer that is connected permanently to the Internet and is configured to work with the IP of the domain that either the sending or the receiving email account is using. It works like a virtual post office: incoming and outgoing mails are sorted and prepared for delivery to their destination.

- **Email account:** the mail servers only allow access to users that have a valid email account with them. Such an email account is like a post box – it stores all incoming email, until you pick it up, and you can deposit outgoing email to be collected by an “electronic postman”. To assure privacy, access to such an account is always controlled by its name and a password: the name can be defined by the account holder, this is followed by the sign “@” and the domain name that identifies which Mail Server has to deal with it.

**Structure:** personal\_identification@domain

**Example:** pepe@sico2.es

**Advantages** of Email over the traditional surface letter:

- **Speed of transmission.** Any sent message is delivered in matter of seconds to destination – no comparison with surface mail that may take days or weeks, or even can get lost
- **Multiple destinataries.** The same message can be sent to several destinations at the same time – just include the respective Email addresses.
- **Networking.** Sending messages to multiple destinataries is ideal for networking in a team – all involved or interested receive the information at the same time
- **Global access.** You have access to your full correspondence of years from any point of the world if you use webmail, or keep copies of your sent and received emails on the mail server.
- **Confirmation of reception.** Optional feature, because the receiving part may decide whether to confirm reception or not.
- **High security level.** With the use of digital certified signatures, Email correspondence is equally or even more valid and secure than surface mail, even for legal purposes.

You can use our Email account in two different ways:

- **WebMail:** access is through a web-based interface to our mail server. This requires an active internet connection, but we can check and answer email from any point of the world without the need to connect our local PC or laptop. Some Email accounts are only available under this concept (e.g. Hotmail or Gmail), but usually also the “normal” mail servers offer the possibility for webmail access.
- **Local Email program** on your PC. In this case, all sent and received emails are stored on our device (PC or laptop), we can prepare and work with them without connection to internet. This is the usual situation when working with an office PC. Examples for such programs are Outlook Express, Outlook, Thunderbird, or Eudora.

### How to configure an Email account with Outlook Express

Configuration of an Email account on an Email client is not difficult, but sometimes more tricky than expected. Here we will show the example of Outlook Express, but the process with all other email client programs is very similar:

- 1.- Double-click on the direct access  to Outlook Express
2. - From the menu “**Tools**”, select the option “**Accounts**”
- 3.- In the Windows “**Email Accounts**”, choose “**Add Email**”
- 4.- Define an **identification name** that shall represent you when you send out an Email. Then click on “**Next**”
5. Introduce your full Email address, type [name@domain.xxx](#)

6.- Now you need to configure some technical parameters. They define how incoming (POP3, IMAP) and outgoing (SMTP) Emails will be treated. These parameters are usually provided by the hosting service of the email account; if you do not have this information at hand, try

- POP.<domain> / SMTP.<domain>

Then click on **"Next"**

7.- To finish, you must establish the name of the account and the password to have access to it. Both were defined when you created this email account, so you should remember them or have taken note. As for the password, you must know it before and type it in blindly because neither now, nor in the future, the real characters will appear.

***Note:** depending on the mail server, instead of <name> you need to introduce the full email address <name>@domain.*

Push **"Next"**

8.- A final screen will tell you that the Email account was successfully created.. Just click on **"Finish"** to end the whole process.

## 5.2. The World Wide Web (WWW)

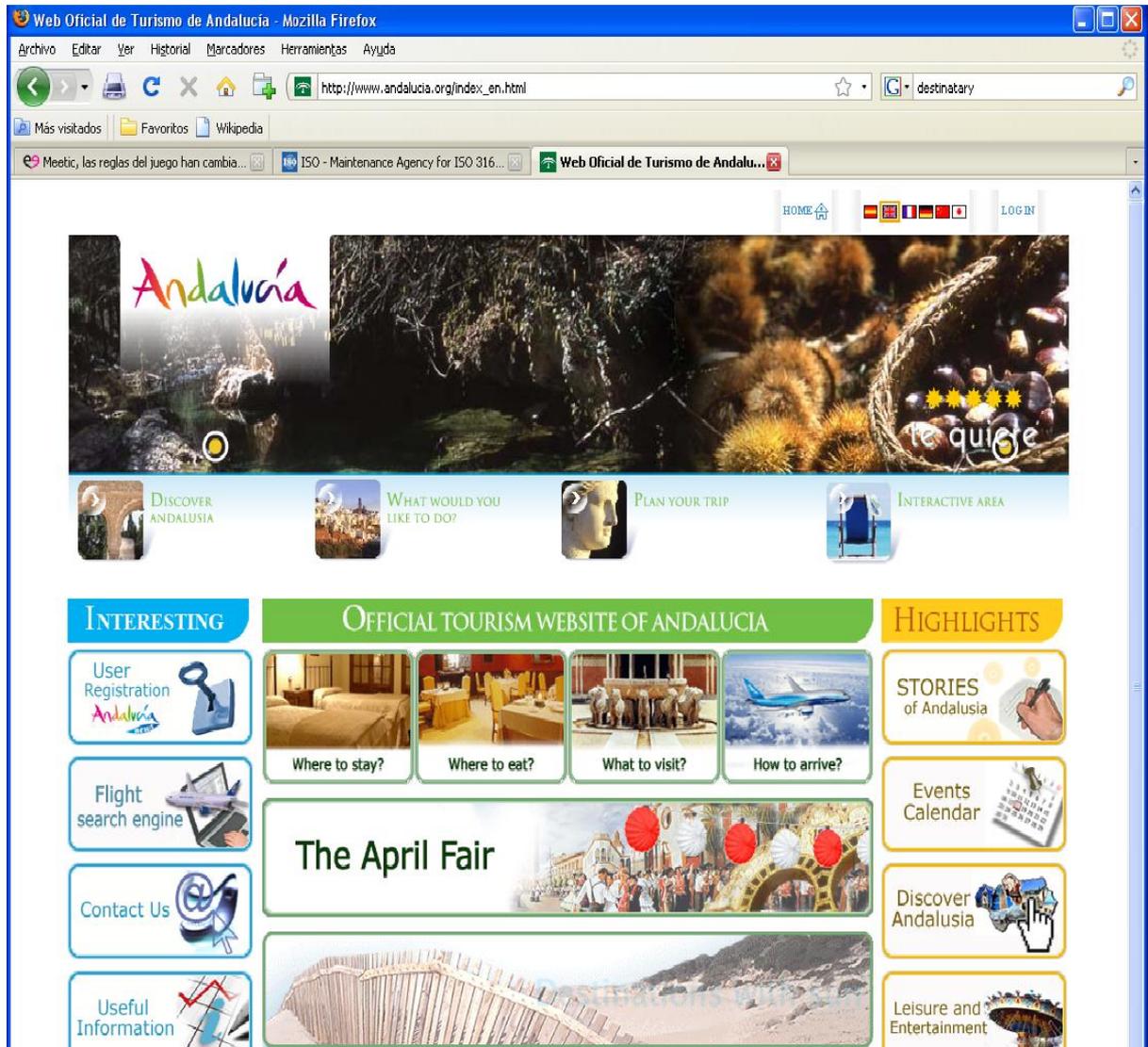
All the content that is visible on the Internet, is based on creating **Websites** that can be viewed with a web-browser. Each website constitutes an independent unit of information and data. All of them are created using the same standard of codification (HTML). This assures high compatibility, web links are used to connect from one website to another.

The **WWW - World Wide Web** is just a huge number of websites that are connected to each other by such web links. Being very intuitive and simple to use, it is now by far the most important and recognised Internet service – up to the point that probably most users believe Internet and WWW to be the same.

The servers that host the websites of the WWW are distributed all over the globe. To have access to their content, you need a special program that is able to communicate with them: the **web browsers** (*see above Unit 3.4*).

This web browser is able to transform the code received from the WWW server, into the interactive image that you see on your screen. This image is called “hypertext” because it may include normal text, graphics, sound, interactive elements, and links to other websites or web pages, either within the same site or outside of it.

Traditional methods of presenting information are sequential: you need to read through the whole document until you can move to the next. The great attraction and advantage of the WWW is that information can be accessed immediately and from any part of a document where a hyperlink is established – something similar to the cross-references in the old encyclopaedias, but with immediate result.



**8. Turismo Andaluz. Example for a website as it appears on the WWW**

**5.3. FTP (File Transfer Protocol)**

The FTP really was at the beginning of what we now know as Internet: transmission of files or short text notes on a network of computers.

Nowadays FTP is still used for the same purpose. It describes a whole set of programs and protocols that are needed to transfer files from one computer to another. The software used for this task is called **“FTP Client”**. While the web browsers for the WWW are easy and simple even for inexperienced users, this is certainly not the case of the FTP Clients: they still denote a somewhat spartanic history as tool for informatics professionals, and are difficult to use unless you have a basic knowledge in this field.

For rural tourism providers, FTP most likely will not have any **direct** relevance related with their business or dealing with their clients. But they will need it when creating or updating their own website: in order to be visible on the WWW, all files that are created locally at the PC will need to be transferred (“uploaded”) to the internet server where the domain is hosted.

Access by FTP as such is simple and easy – for download purpose, it is even possible through your web browser: instead of “www.<domain>” just type in “ftp”.<domain>. In most cases, a screen will appear where you need to introduce the parameters that authorise you for access:

Server FTP	Login (User)	Password
<a href="ftp.iespana.es">ftp.iespana.es</a>	Emilio00	*****

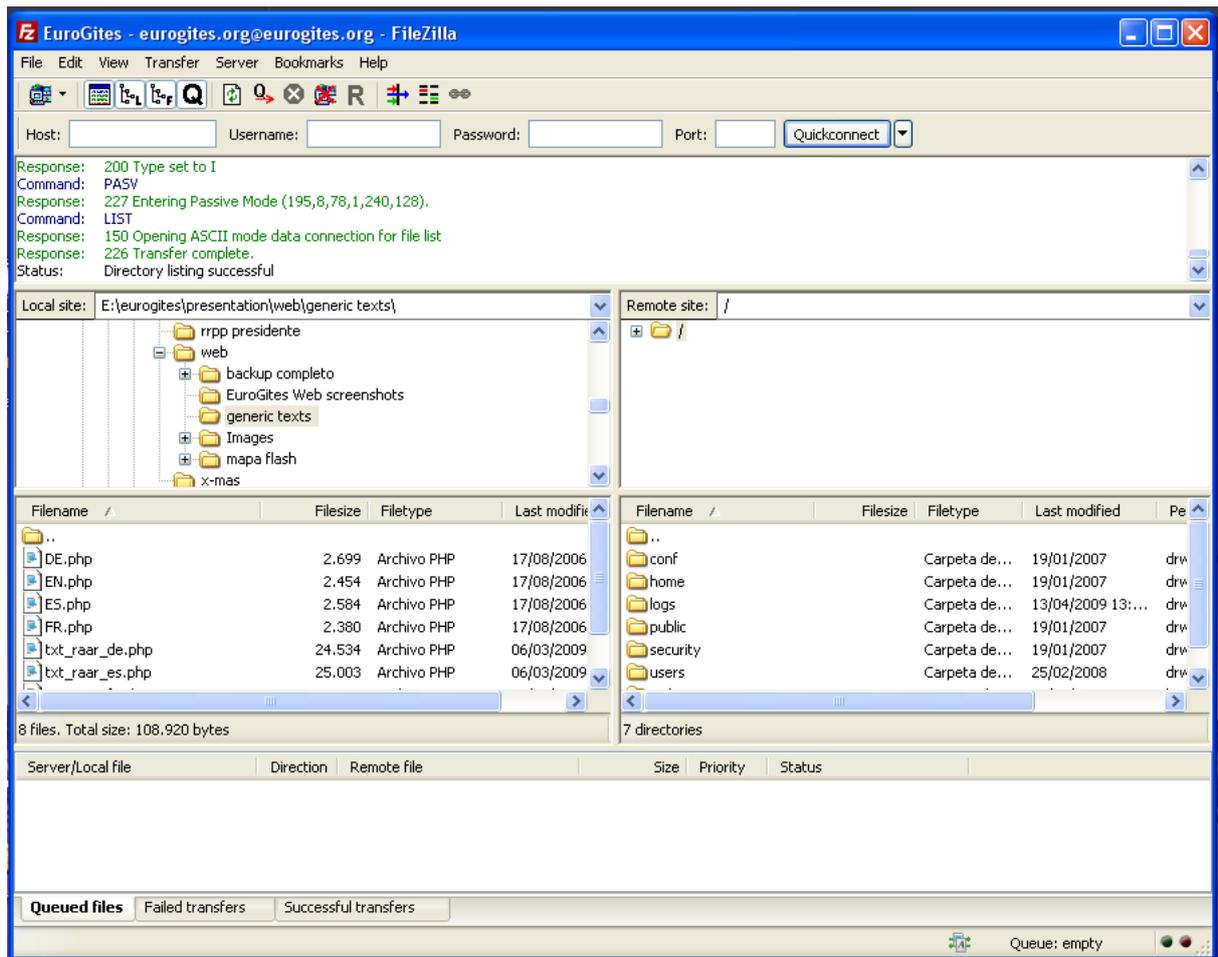
This simple method is sufficient if you only need to download content that is hosted at <domain>.

But for more sophisticated file management between your PC and the web server, you will need special programs such as

**FileZilla**     <http://filezilla-project.org/> (screenshot below)

**CuteFTP**     [www.globalscape.com/products/ftp\\_clients.aspx](http://www.globalscape.com/products/ftp_clients.aspx)

**SmartFTP**    <http://www.smartftp.com/>



## 9. Screenshot FileZilla FTP program

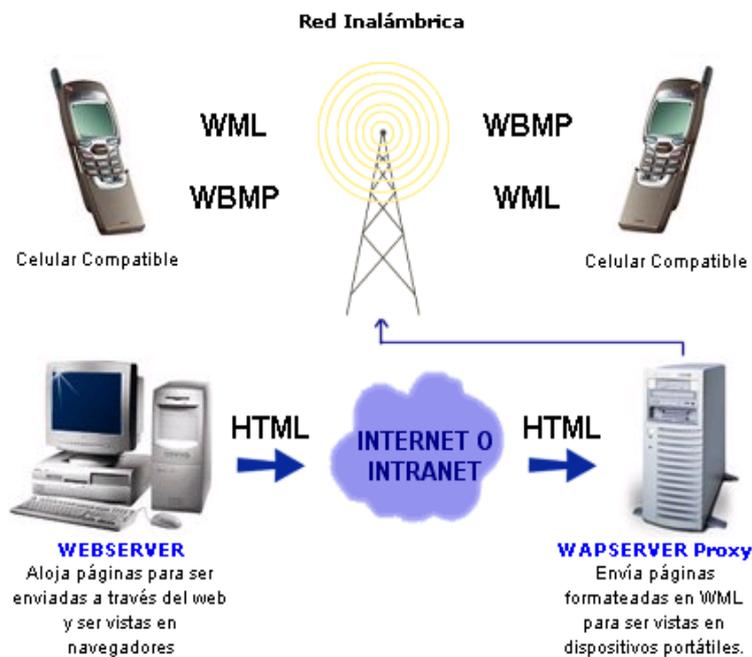
As commented before, FTP belongs to the rather "technical" history of Internet. This is also evident with the above programs: all of them except FileZilla (which is also available in Slovak), are in English.

**5.4. WAP**

**WAP – Wireless Application Protocol** is a type of Internet connection that is especially adapted for very small screens and slow transfer speed, as is (or used to be) the case of mobile phones.

This technology was almost out of use because of constraints such as low transfer speed and small screens on mobile phones.

With the quick introduction of 3G mobile coverage, screen resolutions close to VGA even on mobile phones, and reasonable rates for data traffic, WAP is likely to live a renaissance. Future use is especially attractive in the field of rural tourism, be it for short-term booking, geo-positioning of services in combination with GPS, or messaging services in remote areas without landline internet.



**10. WAP architecture**

## 6. INTERNET AND TOURISM

### 6.1. Internet for tourism SSMEs

Internet is part of our daily life. It generates real possibilities for business, especially if we look at the micro-enterprises in the tourism sector. In the past, their strongest constraint to enter the market was the impossibility to communicate with the client. Internet solves this gap, because on internet the visibility does no longer depend on being “big”, but on being clever, providing a stream-lined offer that fits to a specific market segment.

Today, Internet without any doubt is the most efficient tool to access and exchange new information worldwide as it appears. This is no longer a passive situation where results depend on the action of the user – internet reverts a historic situation where information was hidden and had to be searched for. Proactive systems such as RSS allow to lean back in your seat and wait for the latest information to be sent to you.

Only a few years ago, the client interested in rural tourism was confronted with an opaque amount of unstructured information about the tangible and intangible characteristics of the services:

- Little or no reliable references did exist regarding quality of equipments, service, or surrounding.
- Only big tourism destinations had visibility – small or special interest offers were confronted with “red tape” due to high communications cost

- Only printed information was available (brochures, leaflets, guidebooks) – many of them already out of date when being published.

With the use of Internet and related technologies such as search engines, unlimited information is available worldwide almost the same moment it is created. It can now be stored, filtered, and sorted in seconds depending on completely individual criteria and needs.

With its wide scope of small individual offers, this puts rural tourism in equal condition of visibility, just like any big hotels or companies. To make efficient use of this potential requires some knowledge and tools – we will learn about them later in Units 7, 8, and 9

### **6.2. Internet use by the client**

Acceptance and use of the Internet is rapidly increasing over the past years. It favours the development of special interest or niche products, and clients are getting used to search for them rather on the WWW than through traditional methods. Content of websites can be influenced or even completely be created by the end user, through online forums, guest books, blogs, or client evaluations. This user-created content is very popular with visitors before they decide upon where to book.

The tourism industry is trying hard to keep up with this development. This is not always easy: Internet is creating completely new scenarios for communication, marketing, or sales that have no precedence and take many promotion and sales managers by surprise.

According to a very recent representative survey about the attitudes of Europeans towards tourism (march 2009), already 38% of tourist make

use of the Internet, putting it in first place as a source of information. In the case of visitors that go “off the beaten track” (which is most likely the case of clients in rural tourism), this percentage increases to almost 50%.

The Nordic countries most heavily rely on the Internet for their Holiday plans, lead by Finland (56%) and Denmark (54%). But also in big markets such as Germany, France, and UK still around 40% of the tourists consider Internet as most or second most important for their decision. And these values will be increasing year by year: already now they are higher than above for the younger age group, which is the mainstream clientele of tomorrow.

Yet, in rural tourism so far internet is used mostly as source for information, not for booking. While technical solutions for real time online booking are available at reasonable cost for the hotel sector ([www.booking.com](http://www.booking.com) is a good reference) and widely used by clients for city hotel reservations, this is not the case in rural tourism. This is likely to change over the next years, though, if sufficient virtual trust can be created by the providers through reliable brands or references from earlier clients that are published on the company’s website.

This intangible aspect of trust, generated by non-institutional sources of information such as recommendation by friends or other guests, has highest importance in the decision process: almost two thirds of all visitors base their final decision on it. This explains while at least in rural tourism, still the personal contact by email or telephone between client and owner is important before a reservation is made.

### 6.3. Why do our clients use Internet?

Let's have a look at the reasons and expectations that make clients for rural tourism use the Internet. To know about them is important for us as providers, because it allows us to prepare and present the information about our service in such a way that it appeals best to this visitor.

According to coincident surveys and research, the most important aspects of internet for the visitor are:

- **Get specific information.** We already commented the almost unlimited amount of information that is available on the Internet. The use of search engines allow to select very quickly the most relevant websites, but we still can enhance this through online video, weather reports, etc. The more useful information we provide, the better we will be rated by the visitor.
- **Quick reply.** Internet is immediate, and physical distances do not exist. Clients do expect immediate or quick reply to any request, 24 hours response time is a maximum. Some websites now even include a direct connection to online messenger services or IP phone call!
- **No opening hours.** Websites are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year.
- **Additional information.** Especially in rural tourism, the visitor is attracted by the complete set of services and attraction in a wider geographic area – in touristic terms, this is called "Destination". This refers to aspects such as landscape, nature, surroundings, cultural or gastronomic resources, activities and leisure offers, etc.

- **All-in-One solutions.** The traditional package holiday where every service was included without flexibility, almost disappeared from the market. The new trend is “Dynamic Packaging”: the client picks the different components of his holiday at his own choice and creates his own tailor-made package trip online. In rural tourism we are yet far away from this situation, but it is already reality in mass tourism.

#### 6.4. How to present your tourist service on the Internet

All tourism related information on the Internet is presented through web pages that are based on the WWW. As a tourism service provider, you have the choice to set up your **own webpage**, or you may include your offer in the websites of other companies or entities such as tourism offices, professional organisations, marketing clubs, or online promotion sites. All these are commonly called “**portals**” Of course, also a combination of both is possible.

In the next Unit 7, we will look with more detail into the content and creation of an individual webpage of a tourist service. In this part, we will only look at the **Portals**.

### Portals

The term “portal” as such already indicates the function of these websites: to create a great open door that gives access to a specified type of content. The idea behind this is that such a big “door” will have greater visibility and attraction for the web user than individual web pages, and the portals also may offer added value for these users if they establish a

clear profile of content to be found, quality assurance, or other useful services such as reservations.

Portals can be based on any possible set of criteria: you will find them for a specific territory or region where all kind of businesses and services is included; they can be thematic (tourism, gastronomy, activities, hobbies), set up by a private interest group, a specific brand, etc.

In tourism, the most useful way is to differentiate between public and private portals:

### **Portals run by public entities**

These portals are set up and run by local or regional authorities such as municipalities, districts, counties, provinces, and similar.

Portals **at local level** usually are **multi-purpose**; for example, the website of a municipality will include all local information from waste collection to the next meeting of the City Council. Economic activities or tourism are usually just one submenu on these sites, but their commercial value should not be underestimated: any potential client interested in the area will visit this kind of site, precisely because it provides a comprehensive view of all the resources and services of their area.

When a bigger area is covered, portals tend to be **thematic** on a specific activity such as tourism. If the village or its surroundings are highly attractive for tourism, you may find such a specific tourism portal already at local level. But the most usual cases are tourism portals for a wider territory such as a province or region. It is worthwhile to appear there, but conditions may be posed for your service to be listed (be legally

registered, be member of a local tourism organisation, etc.). If these conditions are met, listing us normally for free.

### Tourism portals in Spain – from country to municipality

<a href="http://www.spain.info">www.spain.info</a>	Spanish tourism portal
<a href="http://www.andalucia.org">www.andalucia.org</a>	Regional tourism portal of Andalusia
<a href="http://www.turgranda.es">www.turgranda.es</a>	Tourism site of Granada province
<a href="http://www.serraniaronda.org">www.serraniaronda.org</a>	Local tourism portal for the area around Ronda
<a href="http://www.lorcaturismo.es">www.lorcaturismo.es</a>	Municipality - City of Lorca

### Private portals – commercial or run by associations

Private portals are usually set up as a business: somebody must pay for their creation and maintenance, this “somebody” is the service listed on them. They can again be local, regional, national, generic or thematic.

For rural tourism, portals are national or regional, set up either by private companies or by associations that want to promote their members. Some of these portals have an option for free listing: this may be an interesting option if it allows you to publish your individual website and Email. But most will charge an annual fee that can vary between 50-250 EUR for a single accommodation, depending on the services that are included (length of description text, number of photos, preferential position in search results within the portal, etc.)

Apart from their core content, portals increasingly tend to extend the information and services available to the visitor. The idea behind this is to keep the visitor as a frequent user of this portal because he can find there

all he wants: not only this increases directly the number of visits, but also contributes to a positive image of the portal and its position in the market. The more visited a portal, the better sales argument can be given to the “economic” client who pays for being listed there - YOU.

Such extra services and content are most frequently:

- Touristic routes and other kind of information such as links
- Forum and Blogs for travellers
- Announcements of interesting events, celebrations, fiestas, ...
- Added-value professional services for the service providers, such as legal or technical assistance, database, forums, notice boards, last-minute booking panels, and similar

Bookings are generated by these portals in different ways.

- Most portals are set up as promotion service for the listed establishments. The objective is to establish a direct contact between provider and client outside the business model of the portal.
- Some offer additionally an optional reservation service, usually based on a commission between 10-20%. This may not be of interest if the clientele is local or national, but it makes sense if you need to communicate with foreign clients.
- Recently some portals also start to offer the possibility for online reservations, i.e. without intervention of a human operator.

Include your accommodation or service on a portal is like traditionally putting an advert in a guidebook: you will be continuously visible to all those interested in your offer. This has a number of advantages over individual activities directly by you:

- **Promotion.** – This is the first and most important reason; portals are experienced in web marketing and dedicate special attention to it. Even if your service of course does not appear on the first page of the

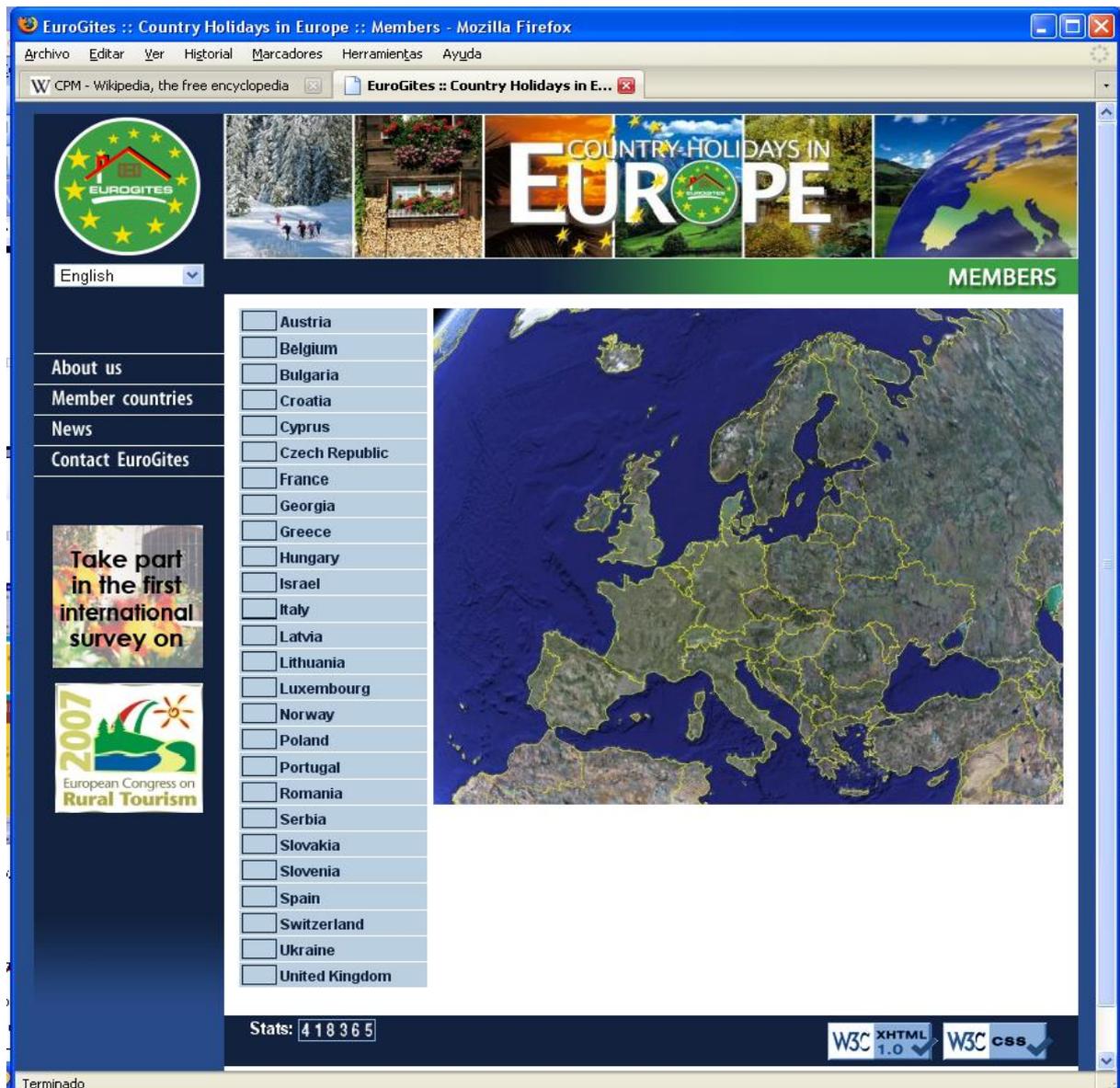
portal, you benefit from a portal with high ranking because more visitors will enter it and in the end, they will find you.

- **Cost.** Either the statistics that the portal provides you, or your own web statistics (see Unit 10), will allow you a close control of results. The indicator should be "total cost / value of real bookings"
- **Quality and trust.-** Portals generate confidence in the customer – this is especially true if the portal is run by an association, brand, or any other entity that assures minimum quality criteria are met by the listed services.
- **National and International links.-** Some portals are part of a wider national or international network, this makes it easier to reach markets outside your own region.
- **Speed in getting results.** A web user knows that a portal will offer him exactly the kind of information he is looking for.

### **Which portal shall I choose?**

Whenever possible, intend to be included in **public portals** that cover your product or area: they are normally free. Results are most likely not spectacular, but still will generate you some occasional requests and reservations.

Regarding private portals, all (or most) of them will try to convince you that a listing on them will increase your occupancy and generate more income than the price they ask you to pay. This may or not be true, the technology is advancing at high speed and portals that are very effective today, may be outdated tomorrow. Price as such is also no argument, it depends on the quality of the contacts and booking requests the portal is able to generate.



## 11. Website EuroGites – European Federation of Farm and Village Tourism

Before signing in to any commercial portal, consider the following:

- Ask other colleagues with similar offers to your own on which portals they promote themselves and how the results are.

- The number of calls or emails generated by a portal is a good indicator, but think also about the **quality** of these visits: one foreign client for two weeks in low season is more interesting than 50 local ones asking for a weekend in high season that is already booked long time ahead.
- Check the additional content of the portals and if it is of interest for visitors
- Make our own research about popularity and ranking of different portals on the internet. Just introduce a couple of search terms into Google and find out which portals appear first.
- If you are in a small country or want to reach foreign clients, a portal must be multi-language. Check the quality of translations – recently there is a trend to use online translation, this usually gives pretty bad results.

#### Online portals and organisations that promote Rural Tourism in SK

[www.eurogites.org](http://www.eurogites.org) European Federation of Rural Tourism – **only link site to the webs of member organisations**

[www.slovakia.travel](http://www.slovakia.travel)

[www.limba.com](http://www.limba.com)

[www.skrz.sk](http://www.skrz.sk)

[www.nizketatry.sk](http://www.nizketatry.sk)

[www.ubytujsa.sk](http://www.ubytujsa.sk)

MODULE	ITC SKILLS AND INTERNET
UNIT	YOUR OWN WEBSITE
LESSON	1 2 3 4 5 6 <b>7 8</b> 9 10 11 12

<b>UNIT 5</b>	<b>7. YOUR OWN WEBSITE</b>	<b>78</b>
	7.1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR AN INTERNET WEBPAGE	79
	7.2. THESE ARE THE IMPORTANT CRITERIA FOR HOMEPAGES:	80
	7.3. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION MUST BE POSTED ON YOUR HOMEPAGE:	81
	7.4. HERE'S HOW TO MAKE SURE THAT VIRTUAL GUESTS DON'T LOSE INTEREST IN YOUR PAGE:	82
	7.5. THE VIEWS OF ACCOMMODATION OWNERS ABOUT IMPORTANT CONTENT ON THEIR OWN WEBSITE	83
	<b>8. THE DESIGN OF A WEBPAGE – STEP BY STEP</b>	<b>85</b>
	8.1. GET YOUR OWN DOMAIN	85
	8.2. FIRST THINK ABOUT ....	85
	8.3. LANGUAGES ON YOUR WEBSITE	86
	8.4. VISUAL STYLE AND DESIGN	87
	8.5. THE STRUCTURE (MENU) OF THE WEBSITE	88
	<i>Example: website of a rural accommodation in Latvia</i>	89
	<i>Additional Menu items</i>	99
	8.6. HOW WOULD AN OPTIMAL SOLUTION LOOK LIKE?	102

## 7. YOUR OWN WEBSITE

Designing your own website – that means either doing it yourself or finding a specialist who will do it for you, but that’s just one part of the mix. You also have to update the page regularly to keep it current. The importance and trustworthiness of your webpage in the eyes of a client rests not only in the presentation of contact information, but also in the offer of timely information about the accommodation’s latest offers, prices, etc. There are lots of opportunities to design and maintain websites today, and if they are kept fairly simple, then they are not expensive because you can do it yourself.

When to update information, and which information is to be updated? You will have to be able to access the structure of your website and change the information yourself. If you need to bring in a specialist, even within one year this can be more expensive than the design of the original homepage. Be aware that many web designers are aware of this future business: they may offer you a very cheap price for setting up of your webpage, but then you depend on them and they will charge for any future adaptation.

On the following pages, we will

- Introduce you to some general considerations to think about before starting your website project
- Give an overview about the importance of a good web presentation
- Go step by step through the process and content of creating a webpage

## 7.1. General principles for an Internet webpage

The design and use of Internet web pages has become more and more popular in recent years, also in Rural Tourism: 84% of surveyed rural accommodation in Spain already either has its own webpage, or is present in one or several portals (INE, 2009). Web pages are now widely used for individual and collective tourism marketing, they are already more important than printed leaflets or brochures.

Use of the Internet is mandatory for the following reasons:

- There are a great many potential clients, inside and outside your country;
- Use of the Internet as a means for communication and any kind of business transaction is expanding very rapidly;
- Once the homepage is set up in a reasonable way, it is less expensive to update, supplement or replace information than printing new brochures;
- The experience shows that electronic reservation of air tickets, hotels and other tourism services is the future – information pages about tourism, Web reservations and online payment systems are all a part of the mix;
- The Internet can be used equally effectively for marketing activities and to obtain information which you need to promote the development of your company.
- Through online forms and data mining, you can gather valuable information about your clients, their interests and preferences, where they come from, and what they want to do or experience.

The simplest way to post information about your tourist facility on the Internet is to choose an existing page (that of an association, a tourist

information centre, etc.) and reach an agreement on adding your information there.

If you want to design your own Internet website, first check out those of other rural tourist facilities. Think about what you like in terms of design and content. Prepare a sketch by hand. If you're not convinced that you'll be able to do the work yourself, then it is better to entrust the work to a professional. Selecting that service provider is an important issue – it will design your page and offer the technical solutions. It will place your website on the server and offer information about updating the data and about other services.

Continue co-operation with colleagues and tourist organisations via the Internet by posting links to other tourist-related websites such as your local and regional Tourism Information Centre, regional and national tourism organisations, and any other institutions which offer information about tourism services in your region and country, especially if they are orientated to special markets that are of interest to you.

## **7.2. These are the important criteria for homepages:**

- Loading speed – if it takes too much time for the page to open, visitors will lose patience and look at other pages instead;
- The ability to correspond with the authors of the page and to make reservations;
- Easy navigation on the page itself.

Poorly prepared Internet pages will scare people off. If the information on the homepage is out-of-date and if you do not answer E-mails within a 24-hour period, you will lose this client forever. Be careful with audio and video effects that come up by default, because they can scare off many users. Videos are now increasingly popular, use external hosting such as YouTube and put a link on your website. Long intros are unnecessary. Users of the Internet today tend to be in a big hurry, and they want to get the necessary information as quickly as they can.

### **7.3. The following information must be posted on your homepage:**

- A contact address on the first page;
- A description of your guestrooms (how many, layout, the category of standards/quality, specifics, photographs);
- Prices;
- A map or route description;
- Opportunities to reserve rooms by E-mail;
- Basic information about the owners;
- Additional services or special offers;
- Local tourism objects with links to the appropriate homepages (information about tourist destinations in the immediate area, about the local parish or district, etc.).

#### **7.4. Here's how to make sure that virtual guests don't lose interest in your page:**

- The information must be specific and easy to find after one click on a clearly formulated table of contents;
- The text must be short and full of content. Use just a few sentences to state that what is most important;
- The text and photos must invite the reader to visit your facility, but be careful – too many photos will mean that it takes a long time to open the page. Visitors may lose their patience and go elsewhere;
- You must update your homepage on a regular basis;
- It's important to make sure that your homepage can be found through various search engines and through links from other tourist-related homepages;
- All of the sections of your page must be unified in terms of style, perhaps harmonising the page with your other advertising materials;
- Work with professionals in designing the website

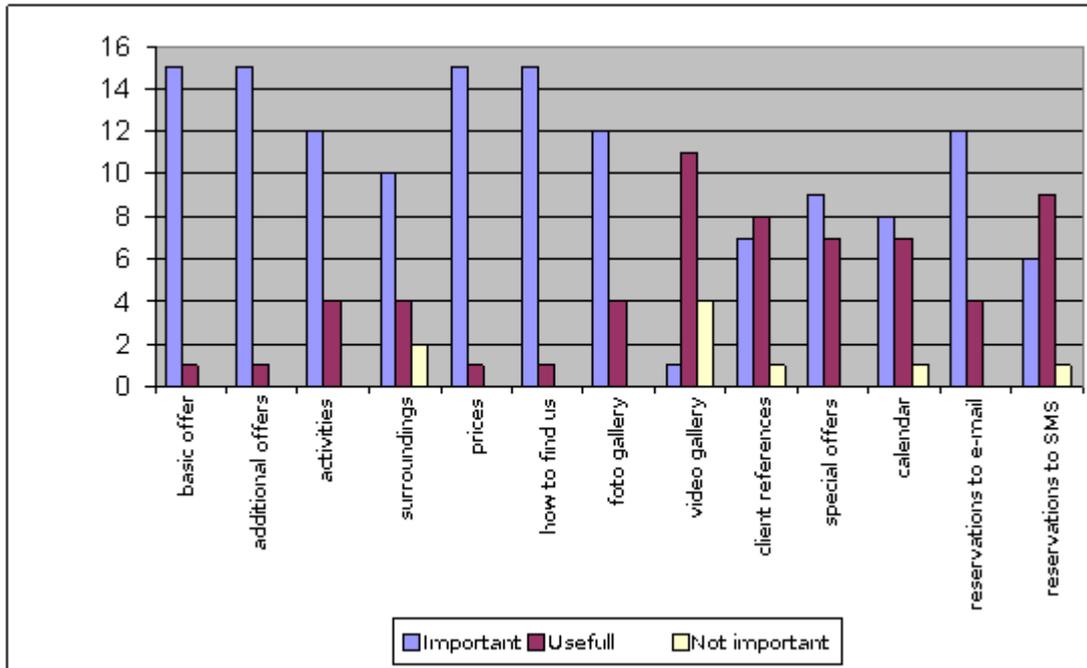
Before you connect your page to the Internet, make sure that it works at least with the two most extended and used web browsers: Internet Explorer and Firefox browsers at least –70% use the former, 25% use the latter.

## **7.5. The views of accommodation owners about important content on their own website**

In a survey amongst accommodation providers in 2006 to find out which sections of a page accommodation owners feel to be important in existing or potential homepages, owners were asked to select from among the following options:

- The basic offer (overnight stays);
- Additional offers (sauna, food, seminars, etc.);
- Possible activities (active leisure, offers from craftspeople, etc.);
- Descriptions of the area (nature, tourist objects nearby);
- Prices;
- How to find us (instructions, maps);
- A photo gallery or album;
- A video gallery;
- Client references;
- Special offers;
- A calendar;
- An announcement about reservations via E-mail;
- An announcement about reservations via SMS;
- Other sections or functions (please specify).

The results can be seen in this chart:



**12. Survey results on web page sections**

We see that respondents in the survey argued that the most important sections are basic information, information about supplemental offers or activities, prices and information about how to find the location. Since then, developments were very quick and for 2009, we may have to add the following items as “highly important”:

- Geographical positioning on Google Maps
- Video or slide show
- Connection to specialized blogs and portals

## **8. THE DESIGN OF A WEBPAGE – STEP BY STEP**

### **8.1. Get your own domain**

We already learned about what a domain is, and how to register it, in the previous Unit 6. Please read this section again if you have any doubts.

### **8.2. First think about ....**

Before you start programming your website, think and decide about a couple of general questions first:

- Not every user of the Internet has fast broadband access. Users do not wait more than 20-30 seconds for a page to load, then they give up or select a different one. Big images, sound, complex graphics all take a lot of time to load – use simple technologies, they may be less spectacular but your site will be up more quickly.
- Care about simple, easy, intuitive content and structure. Again “less is more” – on the first level pages, just give overviews don’t force users to read or view special details they may not be interested in. If people are happy moving through our website, they will also have a more positive attitude to what we have to offer to them.
- Information must be clear, exact, and updated. Wherever possible, provide visual proof of written text through pictures.

- Think about future updates, corrections, and modifications: the more complex your website is structured, more likely will you find problems managing it.
- The possibility for interaction is one of the big advantages of the Internet, and people love to use such facilities. Consider to include elements such as a blog, a guest book, or photo album where former clients can upload their pictures.
- What other added value can your new website provide to a visitor? – holidays are not just about consuming one single service that you offer, they are a whole context of surrounding, leisure activities, going out for dine, wine, and dance, do sports, ... The more such add-on information your site provides, the more attractive will become your establishment as a whole.
- Visitors will need or want to contact with you. One of the characteristics of internet and its users is speed – only include those contact data where you will be able to react and answer in a reasonably short period. For example, any Email should be answered within 24 hours – if you cannot assure this, better do not even publish it even if you have one.

### **8.3. Languages on your website**

Your website will of course be in your local language – this is where most clients will come from. If you want to attract visitors from other countries, think about English as second language – it is most widely spoken and understood regardless the country a foreign visitor may come

from. If your external market is clearly defined, it is of course important to have your page in the respective language – for Slovakia, this should be German, Polish, or Hungarian.

Please remember that information will have to be translated properly: a bad translation leaves an even worse impression. Automatic online translation with tools like Bablefish or Google may be OK for a simple context, but for longer texts there are simply horrible. Use native speakers for the job – they not just to make a literal translation, but also adapt the wording and content to the different culture. Keep contact with your translators, you will need them in the future for any update unless you have a sufficient command of the language yourself for minor changes. A good translation will cost money – calculate with 0,07 EUR / word, this is a standard rate.

Later you can add additional language links or sections of information in each language if you need to do so. Please make sure, however, that you're going to be able to answer requests in the language in which your homepage is presented, or at least in another language which the potential client understands.

#### **8.4. Visual style and design**

Think about the basic design of your website – this is why we recommend first to have a look around how other accommodation is presented, not only in your surrounding area, but also internationally. Check through European websites such as [www.eurogites.org](http://www.eurogites.org) , it links to professional organisations in 25 countries and from there, you have access to individual property websites all over Europe.

If you use a webpage design program – either the one that your ISP offers you for free, or any other that you may purchase at your own PC – it offers you ready templates to choose from. You can preview each design style before selecting it. There are differences not just in background colours, but also in the placement of the main menu (at the top, on the left). If you don't like the style that you have selected, frequently and depending on the design program used, you can change it even after the page has been posted. They may not be exactly what you are looking for, but save a lot of time and effort for a start. With all the individual elements that you can include – logos, photographs, placement of pictograms, etc. - the final result will still be "your" style. Here are the options which are at your disposal:

## 8.5. The structure (Menu) of the website

The most important job for you is to determine the Menu and the set of individual pages that are linked from it.

The basic template has a main menu and a limited list of content pages that are of special interest for a small tourist facility in the countryside. It should at least include the following:

- **Home.** This is the first page that will appear when the client enters your website. It should give a quick overview of your service, including text, photos, and a small map that shows the location in your country and region.
- **Accommodation.** Contains the description of your accommodation offer (or any other service). If it is just one house, you may include all information on one page – otherwise we recommend having one

page with general description and from there, giving access to individual pages about each type of accommodation or service.

- **Activities and Surroundings.** Your visitor wants to know what he can do if he chooses your accommodation. Include a description about your own services if you have them (horse riding, mountain bikes, and guided tours). But also include information about other possibilities “to do” in the surroundings: mountain trails, museums, festivities, events, monuments, ....
- **Prices.** This can be a separate page (recommended), though for small providers the prices can be included either at the “Home” page or on the “Accommodation” page.
- **Photo gallery.** “A good picture tells more than thousand words”. Choose nice, attractive views of your property, outside and inside.
- **How to find us.** Verbal description and a map about how to reach your place. Many visitors now have GPS installed in their car – find out the coordinates of your accommodation (for example using Google Earth) and include this information on your website. This also allows you to locate the property on Google Maps.
- **Contact.** This is where the client can get in touch with you if he is interested. You should indicate at least your telephone and post address. For electronic contact, use online forms instead of publishing your email in order to avoid SPAM.

When you choose a template, probably this (or a similar structure) will already be prepared but you can change the name of the headings or add new ones. The names of the sub-menus should be short to fit into the main menu, but they must precisely reflect the relevant content.

### **Example: website of a rural accommodation in Latvia**

To make it easier for you to think about what to include in each section, we will analyse in detail the example of a tourist facility called “Puķkalniņi” in Latvia. The homepage is [www.pukkalnini.celotajs.lv](http://www.pukkalnini.celotajs.lv).

## Home

This section contains quick information about the main service that you are offering, what's new at your facility, etc. Under the text, you may add a bloc of pictograms.

You shouldn't post too many photographs on the introductory page. Choose one which really characterises your facility – the exterior, an aerial photo, a picture of you by the building, etc.



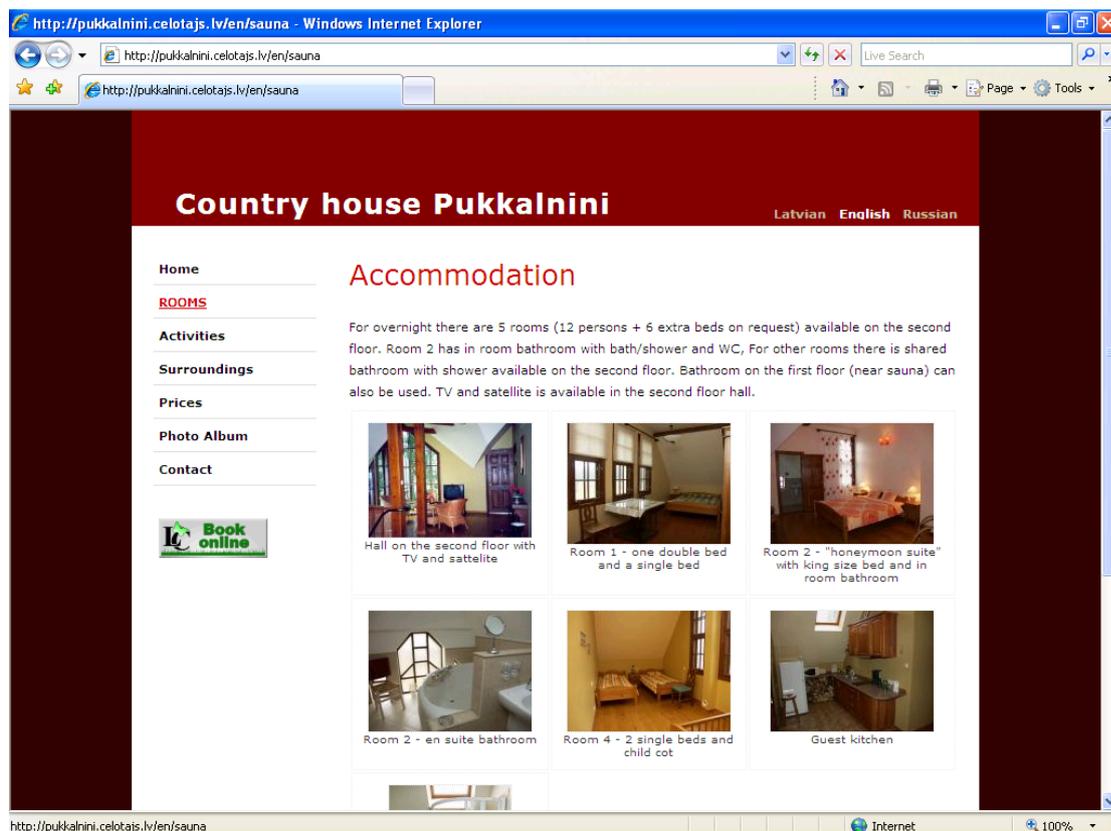
### 13. Home page example

Observe that all the other content items of the website are listed in a narrow frame on the left side – this is why their names need to be short as commented above.

**Accommodation**

Here you present the facilities that are offered to tourists, not only the bedrooms, but also additional areas which they can use – hall, kitchen, veranda, living room, etc.

If you offer **rooms (Bed & Breakfast)**, it is important to describe the bedrooms with great detail, say how many there are, where they are positioned (which floor, which part of the building, perhaps in a different building), the type of beds (single, twin, double), if they have ensuite bathroom or how proximate they are to lavatory and shower facilities.



**14. Accommodation page example**

If yours is a **weekend** (self catering) home where the guests will be alone, it is more important to describe the kitchen, distribution of the rooms, and facilities that the client will be entitled to use (such as a pool, garden, tennis court, ... ). Blueprints of the layout are very useful, that allows you to show where all of the different rooms are.

If you have a different offer such as camping in cottages or space for tents, this is also the place to reflect it.

Photos are important, give them a subtitle that clearly assigns them to a specific room or facility.

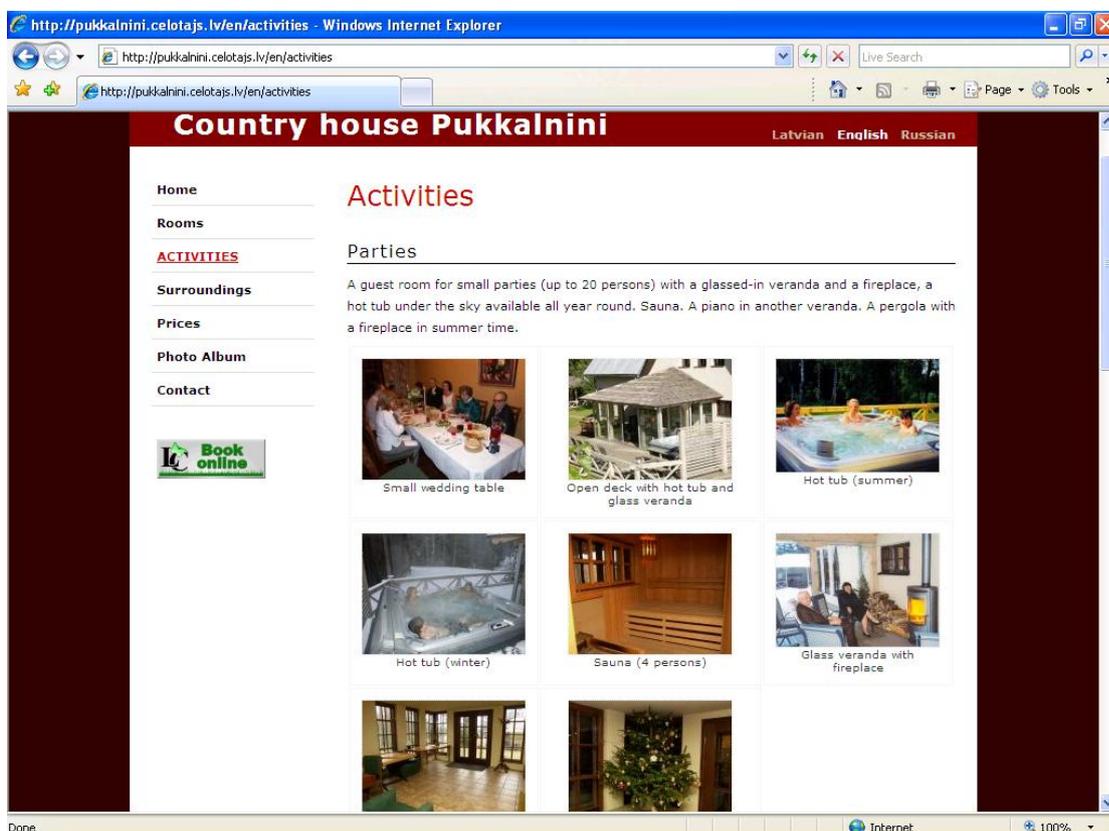
### **Activities and services**

This page presents everything that a client can do at the property or in the surrounding area. If you don't want to emphasise any of the offers through a separate sub-menu, just list all of them on one page – active leisure (boating, bicycling, horseback riding), spas, Jacuzzis, saunas, dining, etc.

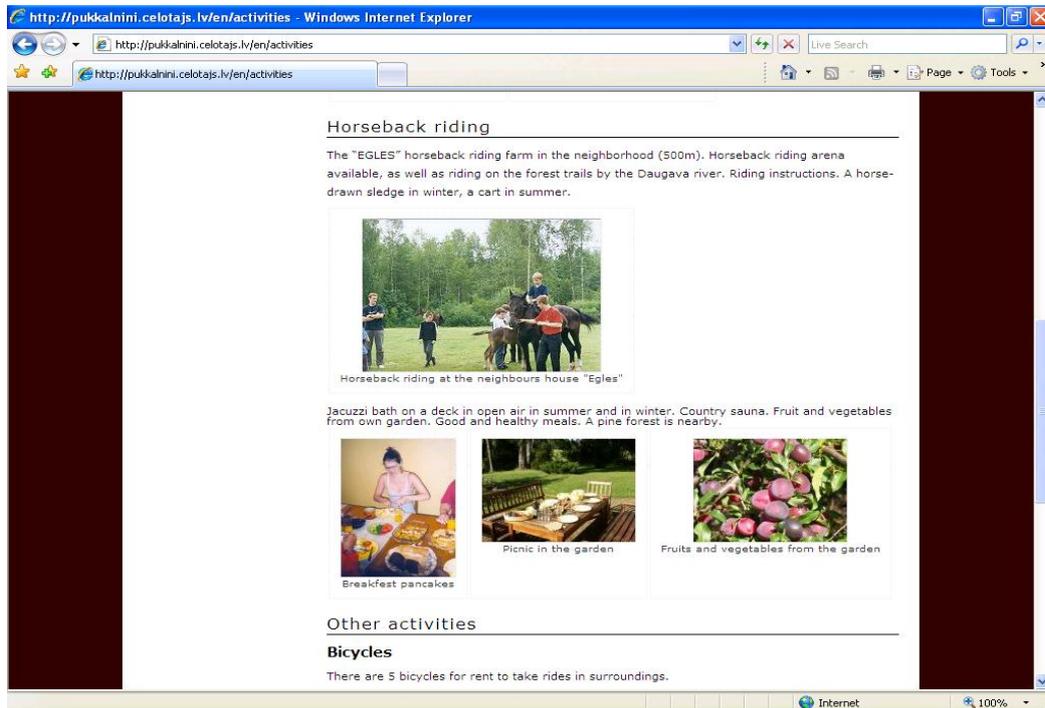
Remember to mention things such as biological farming, wild horses, local potteries, etc. because they are very much valued by clients that understand rural tourism like "coming back to the roots". Supporting images are especially useful in these topics.

In the case of "Puçkalniçi", all activities are listed on one page. The more important ones (parties and horseback riding) are presented individually under a header, followed by a brief explanatory text.

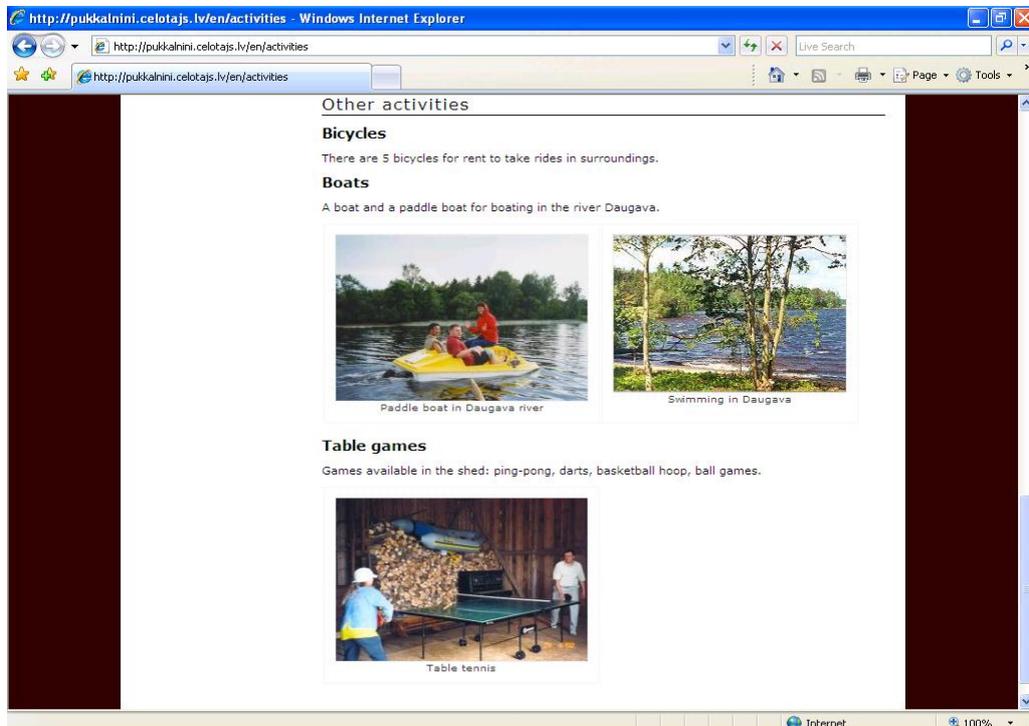
Activities which are less important for this particular facility or are less demanded were put together at the end in an information bloc called "Other activities" – bicycling, table games, boats, a swimming location, etc. Here you can also describe special offers during celebrations such as Easter, Christmas, the Summer Solstice, etc. – unless, of course, you want to separate that information out and place it under a different heading.



## 15. Activities - Parties example page



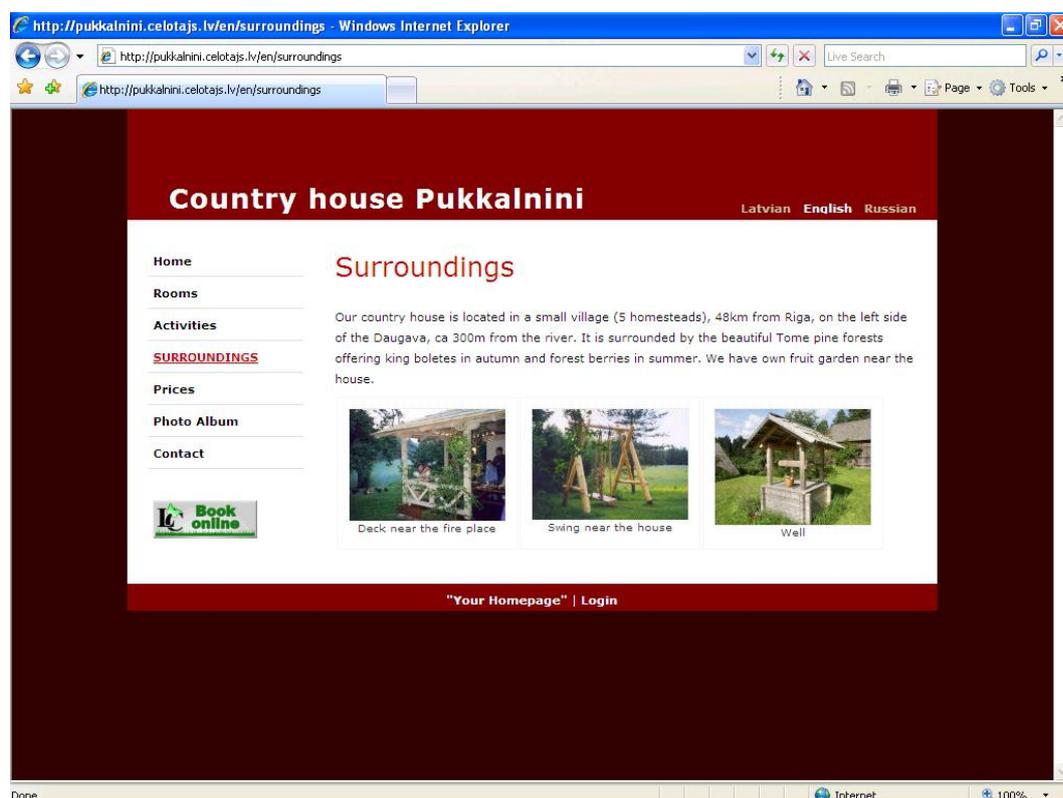
## 16. Activities - Horseback Riding and For Health and Beauty



## 17. Activities – other activities

## Surroundings

The location of facilities is of great importance, so you really have to think about what to record here. The information must be true, not misleading and certainly precise, but emphasise those things that are attractive and convenient to your facility – the local environment, notable objects such as huge rocks, noble oak trees, castles or castle ruins, nature parks, etc. Guests will want to know whether your facility is in a village, a town, in the countryside, in the forest, on the shores of a lake or banks of a river, etc. You should indicate the distance to the nearest store, café, neighbour, or medical service. If you engage in agricultural activities on your property, please make sure to note that in the description – agrotourism is an important element for many visitors.

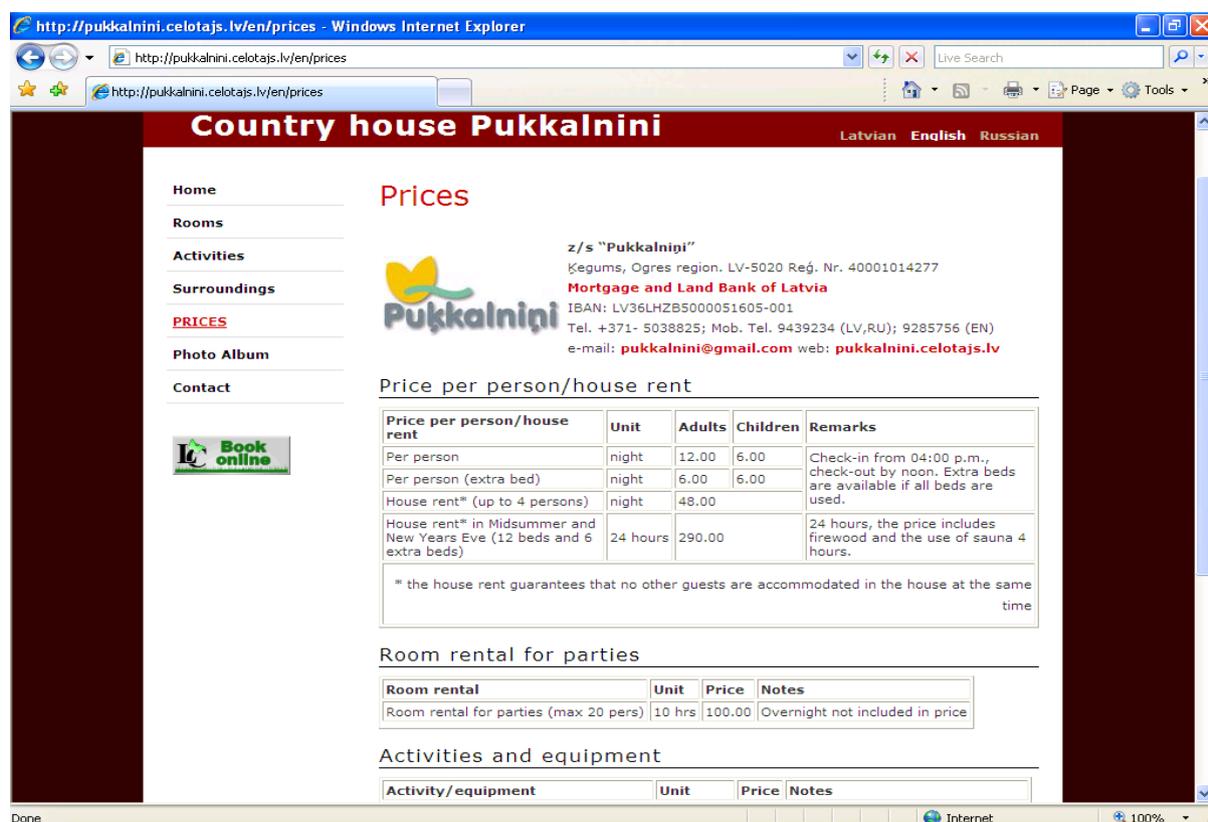


## 18. Surroundings

## Prices

You should post a detailed price list of all possible services and prices. If you have seasonal differences in price, please state it. It is particularly important to update this information regularly, because tourists will rely on the information that they have read here. If the prices are from last year and you have raised them since then, the guest has the legal right to insist on the price that was listed on your homepage.

This page should include information about reservation requirements – payment schedules, rules regarding the cancellation of a reservation, etc. It's worth stating any discounts or packets of special offers (an overnight stay with spa services for a single price, for instance).



The screenshot shows the 'Prices' page of the Pukkalnini website. The page includes a navigation menu on the left, contact information for 'z/s "Pukkalnini"' in the center, and two tables detailing pricing for house rent and room rental for parties.

**Country house Pukkalnini** Latvian English Russian

**Prices**

z/s "Pukkalnini"  
Ķegums, Ogres region. LV-5020 Reģ. Nr. 40001014277  
**Mortgage and Land Bank of Latvia**  
IBAN: LV36LHZB5000051605-001  
Tel. +371- 5038825; Mob. Tel. 9439234 (LV,RU); 9285756 (EN)  
e-mail: [pukkalnini@gmail.com](mailto:pukkalnini@gmail.com) web: [pukkalnini.celotajs.lv](http://pukkalnini.celotajs.lv)

Price per person/house rent

Price per person/house rent	Unit	Adults	Children	Remarks
Per person	night	12.00	6.00	Check-in from 04:00 p.m., check-out by noon. Extra beds are available if all beds are used.
Per person (extra bed)	night	6.00	6.00	
House rent* (up to 4 persons)	night	48.00		
House rent* in Midsummer and New Years Eve (12 beds and 6 extra beds)	24 hours	290.00		24 hours, the price includes firewood and the use of sauna 4 hours.

\* the house rent guarantees that no other guests are accommodated in the house at the same time

Room rental for parties

Room rental	Unit	Price	Notes
Room rental for parties (max 20 pers)	10 hrs	100.00	Overnight not included in price

Activities and equipment

Activity/equipment	Unit	Price	Notes
--------------------	------	-------	-------

## 19. Price table

## Photo album

Arrange this section in accordance with the blocs in your Menu. It is worth starting with this particular section when you're thinking about your page. That makes it easier to post the relevant photographs in each menu section. Pictures size should not be too "heavy", a usual size is 400 x 300 pixels or even less, that will shorten the time that is needed to view the pictures. JPG is the preferred format

Structure the photo album by topics or concepts. In the case of "Puḡkalniņi", there are the following blocs of photographs:

- Pictures of the house to be included in the Home section
- Pictures of bedrooms – Accommodation

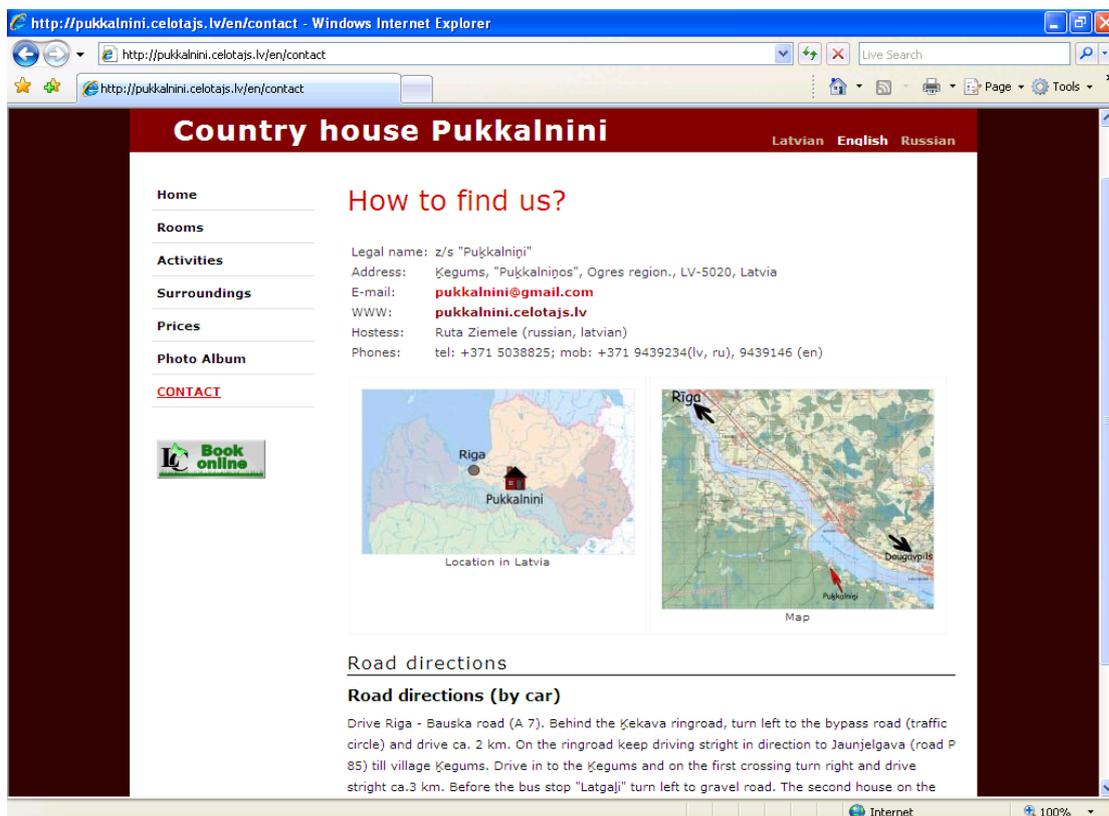


## 20. Photo album

- Pictures of activities, arranged in various deeper blocs and posted as needed in the section Activities
- Maps in the section How to find us

## Contact - How to find us

Here you need to post your address, phone number, E-mail address, etc. If possible, post a map of **Slovakia** or your immediate region to show where you're located. Offer a detailed route and a description of the road, particularly if people will be travelling from important cities or major populated areas in your country.



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the website 'Country house Pukkalnini'. The page title is 'Country house Pukkalnini' and the language is set to 'English'. The main heading is 'How to find us?'. The contact information is as follows:

- Legal name: z/s "PuĶkalnĭpi"
- Address: Ķegums, "PuĶkalnĭpos", Ogres region., LV-5020, Latvia
- E-mail: [pukkalnini@gmail.com](mailto:pukkalnini@gmail.com)
- WWW: [pukkalnini.celotajs.lv](http://pukkalnini.celotajs.lv)
- Hostess: Ruta Ziemele (russian, latvian)
- Phones: tel: +371 5038825; mob: +371 9439234(lv, ru), 9439146 (en)

There are two maps: 'Location in Latvia' showing the location relative to Riga, and 'Map' showing a detailed view of the area around Pukkalnini. Below the maps, there is a section for 'Road directions (by car)' which provides a detailed route from Riga to the property.

## 21. How to find us

Maps have been posted for some facilities on that page. Please remember that most maps cannot be posted on the Internet without paying a fee, even if you have bought them on paper or electronically. Contact the publisher and buy the specific right to post the map on the Internet. Don't forget to post information about how your facilities can be accessed by public transport.

### **Additional Menu items**

You can add any additional items on the menu of your webpage. This makes sense if you have any special attraction or service that is of great importance to your facility (seminars, restaurant, etc.). But be careful not to "overload" the list: that makes it more difficult for your visitor to find his way to. Eight or nine options are still OK, more should be avoided unless you have very special reasons for it.

Some remarks on some of the most frequently added items:

**Meals:** This is very important to tourists. If you offer meals or dining, then provide a detailed explanation of mealtimes, how many people can be fed, etc. If you can put in a menu, that is great – stress what's special about it. Perhaps you grow your own vegetables or buy them from an organic farm nearby. Provide at least approximately prices for dining services. If you offer special holiday meals, make that clear in a separate section. Work hard on the pictures, because these have to be particularly attractive. Put the photos in the album. If you provide meals also to external clients like a restaurant, state this clearly.

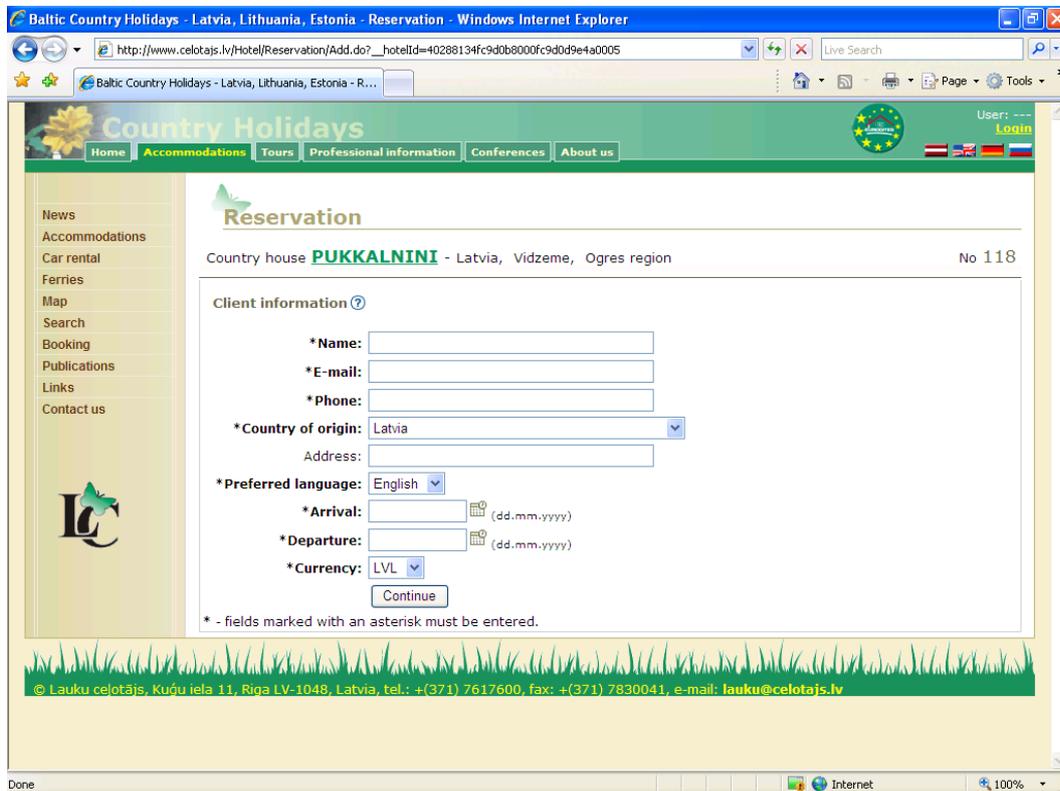
**Seminars:** Here's information about meeting facilities – size, recommended number of participants, placement of the facilities, etc. Offer information about the technologies that you have. State whether there is Internet connection and equipment (tables, chairs, display, beamer, etc.). If you offer coffee breaks and meals, mention them and state the price unless they are a part of the package. You can post a link to the page in which you offer information about dining if you do not want to emphasise the offer of providing food for seminar participants.

**Celebrations:** What's important here is whether people will be indoors or outdoors (perhaps there is a pergola or a barn). Explain where the facilities are located and for how many participants they are intended. Is there furniture? - Can live music be arranged? - Is there a catering service for parties? Think about everything that might be of interest to celebrants. You can also include a party menu with prices.

**Links:** here you publish links to websites of organisations, tourist services, information providers from your district or a broader territory, and other entities that will be of interest to tourists. Please make sure to post links to the National and Local Tourism Board as well as to other organisations which offer information to tourists. Sometimes local and foreign tourists have different priorities, so there can be different links depending on the language version.

**Reservations:** You can set up a separate section with information about how reservations can be made. In that case you'll have to describe the procedure and offer information about how people can get in touch with you (E-mail, special Internet form, telephone number). You can design a specific reservations form which is delivered to you by E-mail. In that

case you'll have to check your E-mail at least twice a day and send an answer no later than within 48 hours.



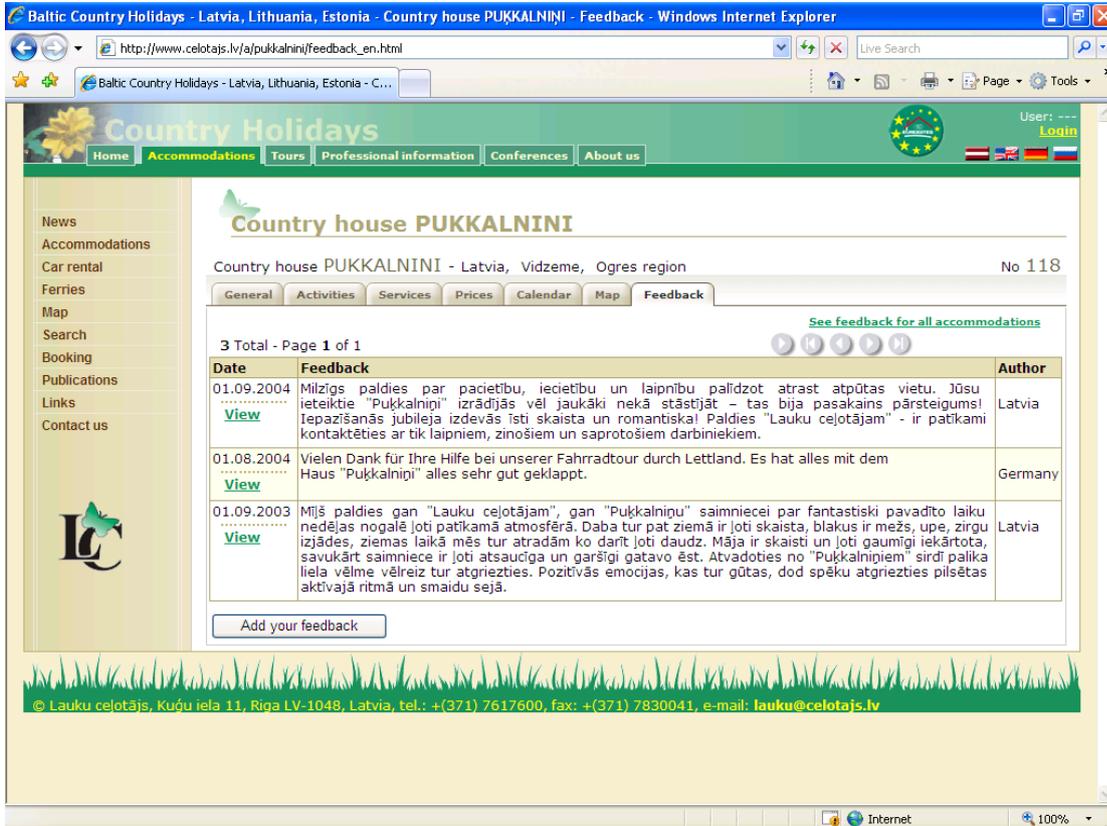
The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "Baltic Country Holidays - Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia - Reservation - Windows Internet Explorer". The address bar shows the URL: [http://www.celotajs.lv/Hotel/Reservation/Add.do?\\_hotelId=40288134fc9d0b8000fc9d0d9e4a0005](http://www.celotajs.lv/Hotel/Reservation/Add.do?_hotelId=40288134fc9d0b8000fc9d0d9e4a0005). The page content includes a navigation menu with "Home", "Accommodations", "Tours", "Professional information", "Conferences", and "About us". The main heading is "Reservation" for "Country house PUKKALNINI - Latvia, Vidzeme, Ogres region" (No 118). The "Client information" section contains the following fields:

- \*Name:
- \*E-mail:
- \*Phone:
- \*Country of origin: Latvia (dropdown menu)
- Address:
- \*Preferred language: English (dropdown menu)
- \*Arrival:  (dd.mm.yyyy)
- \*Departure:  (dd.mm.yyyy)
- \*Currency: LVL (dropdown menu)

A "Continue" button is located below the currency field. A note at the bottom of the form states: "\* - fields marked with an asterisk must be entered." The footer of the page contains contact information: "© Lauku celotājs, Kuģu iela 11, Rīga LV-1048, Latvia, tel.: +(371) 7617600, fax: +(371) 7830041, e-mail: [lauku@celotajs.lv](mailto:lauku@celotajs.lv)".

## 22. Reservation window

**Guest Book:** the informal sources of information are clearly preferred by the clients of rural tourism, and amongst them the opinion of other visitors is the most important. We strongly suggest you to include such an option either at your website itself, or include a link to any other system that offers this option where your service is listed.



## 23. Guest book

You can have a shorter menu than the one that is described here. Maybe start just with a simple one-page website and then add on more pages with the time. The good thing about internet is that you can do this at any time and with immediate effect.

## 8.6. How would an optimal solution look like?

Most likely, you will not only have your own website for internet promotion, but also include your service into regional, national, or thematic web portals. Each change of information, prices, contact data,

etc. requires to manually update at all of them. It is very easy to forget some of them, which may cause problems and conflicts with clients that find different information about the same service.

It should be objective of any new website development to integrate as much as possible with other systems, especially regarding automatic update of information between them. An ideal solution would look like this:

- All data to be published on different websites are stored and managed at only ONE system.
- The structure of these data is such that it allows other (external) systems to read them and then generate their own web visualization.
- Any important information would always be up to date, because – independently on the website that uses it - it will always come from this central system.
- Additionally, this would allow for automatic generation of stand-alone web pages by importing these data automatically into prepared templates, which then are published independently.



MODULE	ITC SKILLS AND INTERNET
UNIT	E-MARKETING
LESSON	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 <b>9 10</b> 11 12

<b>UNIT 6</b>	<b>9. E-MARKETING</b>	<b>106</b>
	9.1. INTERNET SEARCH ENGINES – POSITION YOUR SITE	107
	9.2. BANNERS	110
	9.3. ADVERTISING ON SEARCH ENGINES	112
	9.4. LINKS	115
	9.5. VIDEOS, PHOTOS, GEOPOSITIONING	116
	<i>Videos</i>	116
	<i>Online Photo Albums</i>	117
	<i>Google Maps</i>	117
	9.6. VIRTUAL COMMUNITIES	118
	9.7. EMAIL AS A MARKETING TOOL	120
	<i>How to avoid SPAM yourself</i>	122
	<b>10. WEB STATISTICS</b>	<b>124</b>
	10.1. WEB STATISTICS – SOURCE OF DATA	124
	10.2. UNDERSTANDING WEB STATISTICS – THE TERMS USED	127
	10.3. WEB STATISTICS SOFTWARE PACKAGES	129
	<i>Webalizer</i>	129
	<i>Awstats</i>	130
	<i>Google analytics</i>	132

## **9. E-MARKETING**

**OK.** Now you have your own homepage, but with this you're not done in the world of Internet advertising and promotion. Please understand that the World Wide Web is bulging with all kinds of Web pages. How is the tourist to find yours? Web stats, links, banners and posting of information on other homepages with links to yours – all that is extremely important.

Why should you be active in promoting your new website on the Internet?

Internet is the most powerful communications tool that ever existed. If we make clever use of it, even the smallest products and initiatives will find their client.

First of all: the fact alone that your site is online, does not mean that anybody will find it. This is like printing 2000 leaflets without thinking about how to distribute them efficiently so that they reach the clients that are interested in your product.

E-Marketing is based on traditional marketing techniques, which remain important and effective. It adds new opportunities and methods to communicate our product to the digital community, many of them are completely new and sometimes difficult to understand. But if we want to get all the potential out of Internet, we first need to learn and know about them.

## 9.1. Internet search engines – position your site

Internet search engines and amongst them, **Google** and **Yahoo**, are very popular with web users to find the information they look for. For example, if they plan a cycling holiday in Slovakia Tatra mountains, they would simple type "*cycling holidays Tatra*" and check the web sites that appear as result. Unless there is a very specific interest, only sites listed on the first two or three pages will ever be considered – therefore you must try to appear in such first positions.

**How is this achieved?** Making your website appear at such a prominent position does not come by itself. But – in spite of some "gurus" that try to convince you differently - is not difficult if you observe a couple of simple basic principles as follows:

- **Good page content.** Search engines read and index the content of web pages, good clear written content is the key requirement for the success.
- **Links to your page** from other popular pages – the more links and the more popular the pages are from which they originate, the higher ranking will receive also your own page
- The use of **keywords** is critical: the search engines "blindly" read the first 100 Kbytes of each webpage (the "Home" as well as any other pages within your website). Then they observe how many times each word appears and in which position. Placing the keywords that explain and describe the core aspects of your service at the beginning of the text is therefore very important; for example, the name and type of the services you offer, the village, and the region. Other

important keywords when people seek information about rural and country holidays are "countryside", "leisure", "active leisure", "weekends", "accommodations", "country homes", "campsites", "nature", "tourism", "country tourism", "activities", "travel", "horses", "boats", "sauna", etc.

■ **Metatags.** This information appears at the beginning of the code that generates your webpage. It is not visible to the user, but will be read and analyzed by the search engines. You should pay attention to the content of the following three metatags:

- ◆ **TITLE.** The most important content of this metatag will be displayed when our site is listed as a search result.
- ◆ **DESCRIPTION.** This should be a short summary of the content on our website. Only the first 255 characters are read and considered by the search engines, longer descriptions do not have any effect.
- ◆ **KEYWORDS.** Join here all the keywords that you consider most important to describe content of your website. Due to abuse, this list is no longer considered for example by Google, but it is still useful for other search engines.

■ **Regular updating of information.** The search engines repeat their analysis at certain intervals and keep record of changes. A site that remains without update over longer periods of time will be devaluated in its ranking.

As you can see, some of the above are easy to implement. But beware of trying to be too clever: for example, you may think to increase your

ranking by repeating the same keyword over and over on the start of your pages. Sorry – this will not work for several reasons:

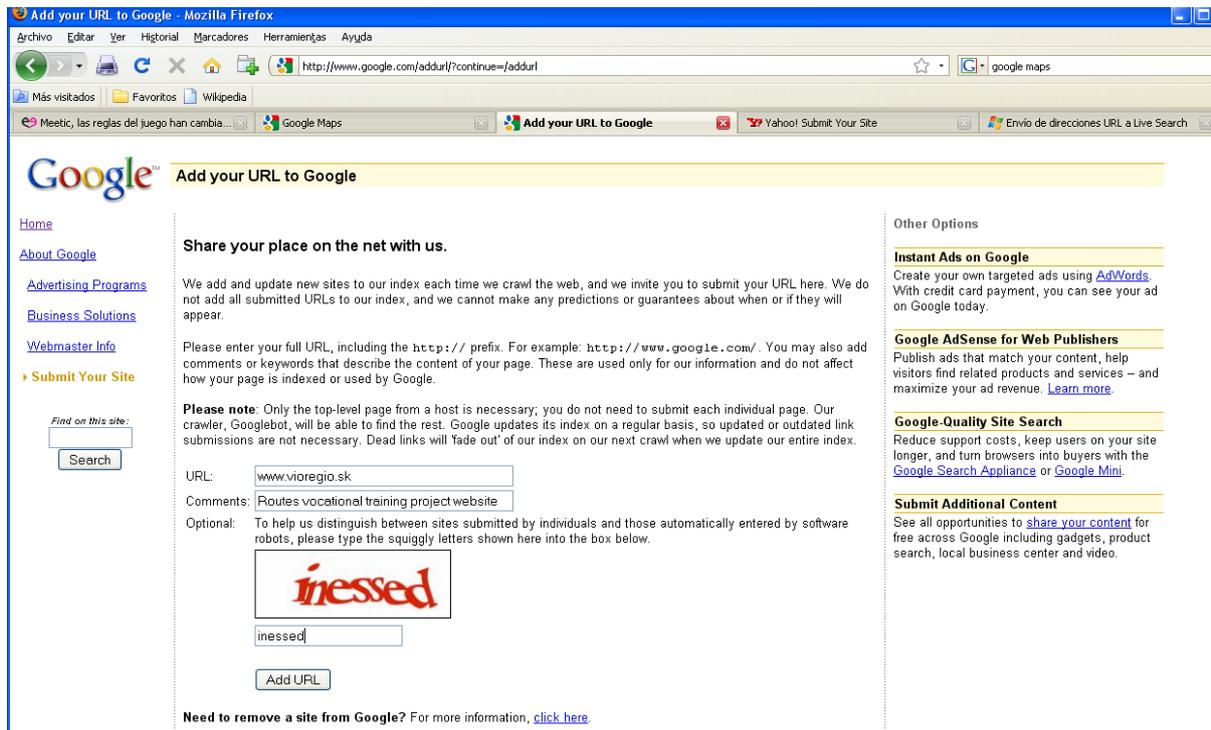
1. your website will not be pleasant to read for the user, and he will change to another one
2. the search engines are aware of such tricks and use special controls and filters – in our example, if a specific keyword appears too often, they assume abuse and not only “forget” about it, but may even penalize your site by excluding it from any search results.

**Bottom line:** make reasonable and responsible use of the above rules and tools. Keep in mind that your webpage must be attractive and of interest to the visitor. The search engines precisely try to simulate this “attraction and interest” through their analytical and ranking rules – and they do it pretty well, so don’t try to play tricks on them!

### **How can my website be included in search engines?**

If your page is linked to and from other popular sites, search engines will find it on their own. If you want to speed up the process, register your new website with search engine servers:

- ◆ Google: <http://www.google.com/submityourcontent/index.html>
- ◆ Yahoo: <http://search.yahoo.com/info/submit.html>
- ◆ MSN: <http://beta.search.msn.com/docs/submit.aspx>



## 24. Google search engine page for registering new site

Above is the registration screen for a new site with the Google search. The only „must“ information to enter is the URL, the rest is done by the server. There is no guarantee of how soon this search server will visit your site, however, normally it does not take long.

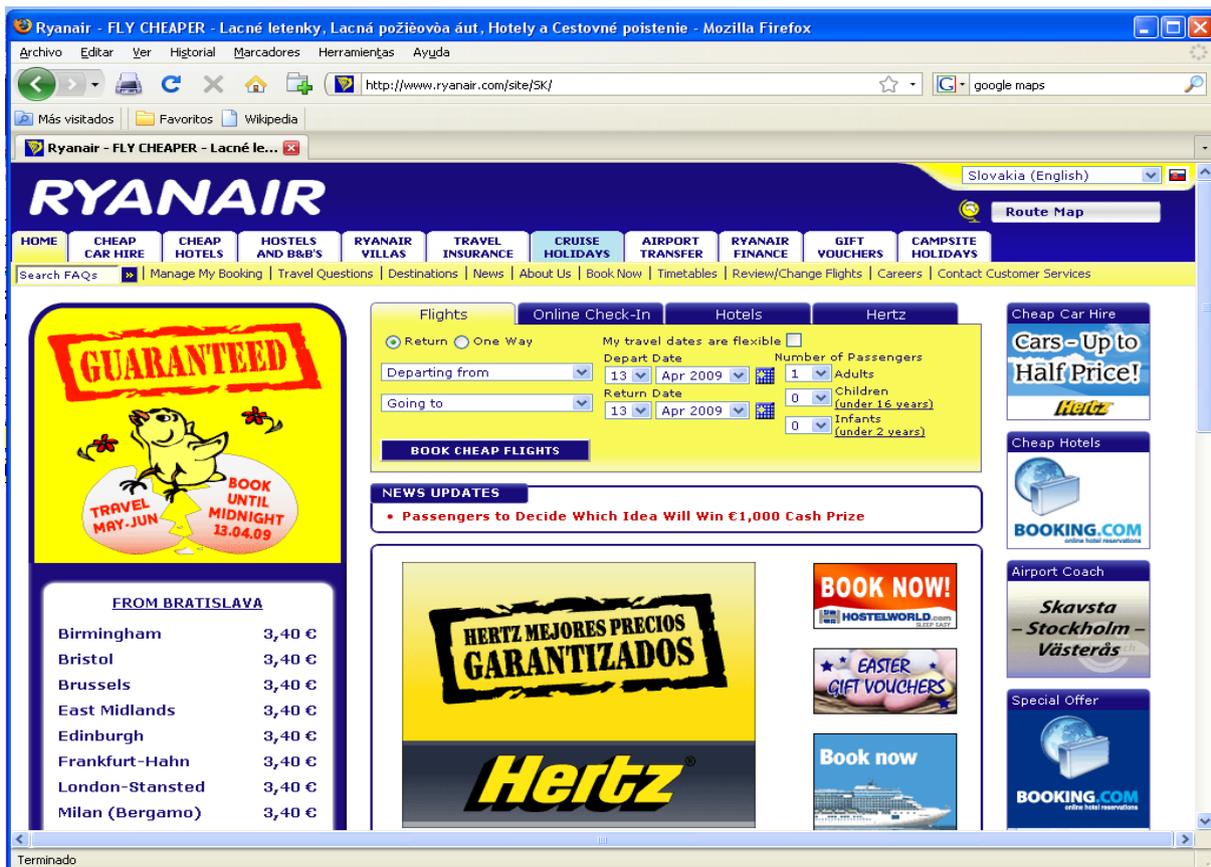
## 9.2. Banners

A banner is an advertisement of a specific size, published by one company on a website run by another one. Banners are usually posted on the first page or in relation to specific offers – hotels or car rentals on an airlines website, for example (see below the example of Ryanair: announcements

of Hertz, Booking.com, and other tourism services). There are all kinds of possibilities here.

Nearly all Web pages offer banners, but the question is whether your clients are going to see your banner. Also ask whether the banner will be noticeable. Is it related to the subject matter of the Web page?

Banners have to be precise, short, and they need to encourage people to click on the link. Animated banners change after a specific period of time and thus, allow include more information. Also of importance is the page on which the banner is placed – how many banners are there already? – if too many, yours will be “lost” amongst them.



**25. Banners on the SK Ryanair website**

Banners are sometimes posted on the basis of **barter agreements**. That usually requires two websites which are more or less identically recognised and visited, otherwise the banner on one of the pages won't be of much use.

**Commercial banners** are normally paid for according to the number of times they are published. This is called **CPM (cost per thousand prints)** and rates are normally around 20-30 EUR per thousand times that the banner appears. The **click-through-rate (CTR)** – the percentage of viewers that really click on the advert – is only around 3%: this means that for 1000 times your banner is published, only 30 visits to your website can be expected. This method of payment should make you think about the real effect that a banner can have for your business: the cost only makes sense if a visitor to your website can really generate a tangible business for you. Think about the time of year when you really need to attract additional attention or customers – for example, to contract a banner shortly before high season when you are already fully booked, does not make any sense; while putting a banner with the text “last rooms available” in case of vacancies short before a high-seasons date is likely to be very effective. If the banner is in place, watch to see what the response is. If you can't do that by looking at Web statistics, ask your clients how they found your advertisement.

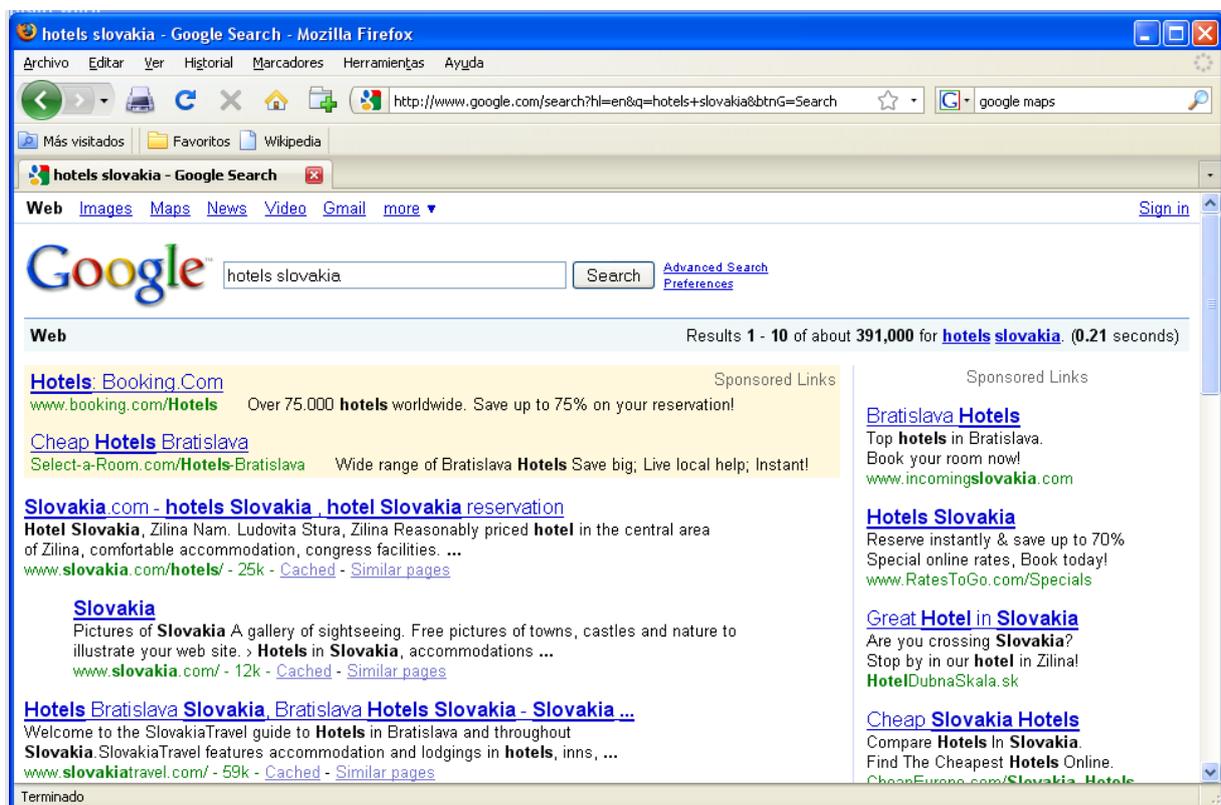
### 9.3. Advertising on search engines

Most of you will have experience using search engines like Google. And you may have wondered why there are some results highlighted on top and on the right frame: these are paid adverts that appear depending on

the context such as search terms. The example beside is for **Google AdWords**, but similar schemes are available at all other search engines such as Yahoo, MSN, Terra, and similar.

To contract such a campaign is very easy, you just need to follow a couple of steps (we will give example for Google, but others are similar):

- Go to the Adwords page [www.adwords.google.com](http://www.adwords.google.com)
- If you do not already have one, create an account for AdWords with Google. This is different from having a Gmail account, because payment details need to be registered as well.
- Follow the instructions, they are very intuitive and the interface is available in most European languages.



## 26. Search results Google with ads for "hotels slovakia"

The great advantage of AdWords over banners is that you can decide under which search keywords your advert should appear. As we can see on the example above, the adverts are all related with the search term "hotels slovakia": for sure, the advertising companies have established "hotel" or maybe also "slovakia" as search keyword that triggers publishing of the add. This allows you to define advert campaigns clearly targeted to specific searches and segments – if you define in detail the combination of search terms that will make your ad appear, the results can be spectacular.

Payment is **per click** on your advert: it does not matter how often it appears, only when a user really clicks on it a charge will be made to your account (different from what is usual for banners – see above). The cost per click depends on the keywords that you established, and can be anything from 0,10 – 3.00 EUR per click. Google AdWords allows starting campaigns from as little as 10 EUR: if one of the "cheaper" keywords is fine for you, this may generate up to 100 visits of potentially interested clients. The risk is low in terms of investment - a good opportunity to try if this sort of publicity brings any result for your business.

This system allows calculate and evaluate the impact and effect of the campaign. But again, as with banners, keep in view that each visit should be able to generate business, if possible immediately.

## 9.4. Links

Links or hyperlinks lead to another Internet address. When you click on a hyperlink, you will go directly to the page – either in the same window or in a second, perhaps smaller one. Links can cost money, but usually they are posted for free just to enrich the specific page with information for potential visitors, as well as to attract additional visitors. You can arrange for a swap of links just as is the case with banner advertising (see above) – use barter to exchange links with another page, both of you will post the link for free. Of course, look to see whether the link will really help you in any way, perhaps just increasing the number of hits on your page.

The type of links depends on the website, for example at [www.raar.es](http://www.raar.es) has links to many other websites related with Andalusia as a whole, while regional sites would refer to more local information.

The usefulness of link exchanges is based on the effects that it has on ranking at search engines: the more links point to your page, the higher ranking you will get yourself.

But even without reciprocity, you should post links to other pages that would be of use to your clients: this enhances also the attraction of your own service because the web user finds out about all the things he can do and see if he stays at your accommodation. Some interesting topics to be included in your list of links are:

- ◆ Entertainments (concerts, theatre performances, sports events, etc.) and ticket reservations
- ◆ Active leisure opportunities in your area
- ◆ Leasing of equipment (bicycles, boats, horseback riding, leasing of automobiles, etc.)

## 9.5. Videos, photos, geopositioning

Internet is in continuous change. Every day new online facilities and services appear. Many of them are driven by the demand and contribution of the worldwide community of web users, based on sharing common resources and information between all and for the benefit of all.

Search engines such as Google take these developments into account when they calculate the ranking of web content. They no longer limit their search to traditional websites, but also include videos, photos, or services that are registered with Google tools such as YouTube or Picasa. Observe the search results to convince yourself about the importance of this type of content: you will increasingly find references to video clips, picture galleries, and to businesses that are registered with Google Maps.

Antes de decidirnos por uno de ellos, hay que analizar lo que nos ofrecen y a que precio, como se establece la relación con el cliente, si el portal está en varios idiomas, realizar consultas en los buscadores para ver la posición que ocupan, etc. Y por supuesto que el portal sea una empresa legalmente constituida.

### Videos

Videos to be uploaded to YouTube can be very simple – sometimes the recording with a good mobile phone or digital camera can be sufficient. Such videos are not “heavy” in size, upload is simple, and the only thing you need is to sign up with YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/signup>

Other video services on the internet that you should consider are

**VEOH**                      <http://www.veoh.com/>

**TinyPic**                    <http://tinypic.com/>

**MySpace**                 <http://www.myspace.com/>

When asked about a presentation or description, don't forget to include the same keywords that you already defined as important for your website: they will also be read and indexed as relevant.

### **Online Photo Albums**

There are many of them, Google at this moment indexes content that is stored at **Picasa Web Albums**. Picasa is a stand-alone program to edit, find, and share your photos. It belongs to the Google group of programs and services, installation and use is free, and it can be downloaded from <http://picasaweb.google.com>

Once installed, it integrates completely with any other of the Google online services if you are registered as Gmail user.

### **Google Maps**

For rural tourism providers, **registering your establishment at Google Maps is right now the most effective investment** in time (but not in money because so far, it is for FREE) that you can make. Once registered, your establishment appears at online searches not only with Google Maps, but also – and more popular with international travellers – on Google Earth.

Additionally, registered services are listed on top of any search result on Google that refers to their keywords.

All you have to do is go to <http://www.google.com/local/add/splashPage> and register your business or establishment. Enter your business information in the form, your listing will appear to the right. This is just a first step. After this has been completed, you will be able to upload photos and videos, specify categories, payment options and business hours and much more.

Of course, again and as you may imagine, be sure to include the important **Keywords** in any title, description, or shortlist that may appear during this process.

## 9.6. Virtual Communities

Virtual communities are a new phenomenon of the Internet that can be very useful for promoting your rural tourism establishment.

A **virtual community** or **online community** is a group of people that primarily interact via communication media such as email, internet social network services, or instant messages rather than face to face. Motives and purposes of such a virtual community can be social, professional, educational or any other special interest. Virtual and online communities are starting to substitute face-to-face communication, they become increasingly important to generate trust between people who do not know each other in real life. Such Internet-based social networks are a completely new way of human interaction, and their proliferation seems to

be the result of significant socio-technical and socio-cultural behaviour of the so-called "Internet generation".

Usual technical means employed are text-based chat rooms, blogs, and forums that may also use voice. Content at these sites can be generated by any registered user that is part of the community.

Available surveys and research give proof of the rocketing importance of such Virtual Communities in tourism. In a certain way, they complement or even substitute the traditional "mouth-to-ear" propaganda in the context of a decision process that in tourism, strongly relies on informal information sources.

**How can you benefit from these Virtual Communities?** The important thing is to achieve that your establishment appears mentioned in these communities and if possible, with positive comments from your clients. This creates a reference for other travellers that may consider staying in your area, and increases the probability that they will book with you.

Join such a Virtual Community as member is easy – just register at their website. As a registered member, you are then allowed to create own content on their website – in theory, you could write a beautiful fake report about yourself and post it. But it is not that easy.

Virtual Communities live on their reputation and independence from commercial interests and influences. This is why all of them are very careful to monitor new content. Depending on the community, rules can be very strict - for example a new hotel may only be included after at least three different members recommended it; only the name but no

links nor email addresses may be published; or any new content will be monitored and approved by the webmaster before being published online.

With all these rules and controls, virtual communities want to avoid what you – as a service provider – would like to achieve: a content that seems objective but in reality, is biased in your favour. Even so, you have a fair chance to be included if your contribution is reasonable, unbiased, and sticks to the rules of the specific community.

The most popular Virtual Communities in tourism as per March 2009 are the following:

**Trip Advisor**      <http://www.tripadvisor.com>

**Lonely Planet**      <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/>

**WikiTravel**      <http://wikitravel.org>

**Planet Ware**      <http://www.planetware.com/>

**Trivago**      <http://www.trivago.com/>

## 9.7. Email as a marketing tool

Email marketing belongs to the concept of “Relational Marketing” activities where a direct contact between provider and client is established. It uses the Email for promotional and marketing purposes, sending information about our business to a list of recipients. These recipients can be former clients, persons that on some earlier occasion requested information about our services, or you may even use email address lists of potential clients that never before have been in touch with you.

Using Email as a marketing and promotion tool offers various advantages:

- The messages can be personalised to each recipient
- Very low cost
- Quick reaction and results

The easy access to email address lists has led to a phenomenon called **"SPAM"**, defined as *"the abuse of electronic messaging systems such as Email or messaging services to send unsolicited bulk messages indiscriminately and without being previously authorised or requested by the destinatory."*

Without such a previous authorisation, Email Marketing is equivalent to SPAM, which is prohibited and may be subject to heavy fines in most countries of Europe: only use Email addresses where you are sure that such authorisation was given. In the case of a previous business relation (such is the case of a former client), consentment is assumed by default. In both cases, each Email message must always include an advice about how to opt-out from future messages.

Even with previous authorisation, most email account holders receive more publicity email than they really want or have time to read – most finish directly in the "Deleted messages" folder. Your message must be very attractive and short, "down to the point". If you consider the following points, the chance to be read grows considerably:

- a short and attractive title for the Email in the "Subject" field (this part is always visible!) and as first line in the message
- Many email users have the pre-visualisation window of their email client activated. This means that they will see the first 10-20 lines of your message – any attractive content should be concentrated in this part e.g. as a summary.

- Keep messages body text short. If you need to include longer texts or information, store them as remote file or micro-website and include a link to them in the Email.
- Be reasonable in the frequency of sending emails – concentrate on special occasions or events, and wherever possible, select previously the recipients that are really interested in the specific message.

### **How to avoid SPAM yourself**

Did you already receive unsolicited email propaganda for Viagra, Rolex watch imitations, or penis enlargement? – **Congratulation!!** – you are member of the club!

Seriously: if your email address is published somewhere on a website or any other document that can be found on the Internet, be sure that sooner or later it will be included in some email database that is used to send SPAM. SPAM is a real problem, in the field of business email it is calculated that already more the 80% of received email belongs to this category.

SPAM email list are illicit, and there is no possibility to be deleted from them. But you can do at least something to limit the scourge of SPAM:

- Avoid publishing your email as text on your website or anywhere else. Use forms instead, or include your email address in a small graphic file.
- Never respond to unsolicited Email. You only prove to the sender that this Email address exists and that it is used – this will just push it up on the list of addresses to be used for further SPAM.
- The same happens if a SPAM email includes a (fake) link to opt out: this just confirms the existence of you email address

- If you can identify the sender's email, inform politely that you want to be deleted from his list. If no sender address can be defined, usually the combination "postmaster@<domain>" works as well.
- Install anti-SPAM programs on your PC or – even better – on your Email Server.

Of course you can always create a new Email address and cancel the one that is SPAMmed. But this is difficult if the old address is popular with clients and providers, and should only be the last choice.

## 10. WEB STATISTICS

For efficient marketing, it is very important to control the results of your promotion activities such as search engine optimization, introduction of content in blogs or virtual communities, promotion on a web portal, etc. In the case of Internet, it consists in finding out who visits what pages, from which countries, in what languages, linked from where, etc.

The more time and money you invest in the marketing of your site (banners, promotional articles, publications, etc.), the more important it is to follow up the feedback to make sure if your home page works as good as you expected. All your home page visitors are registered in the files of the internet server, and there are web statistics software providing for user friendly overview forms.

This chapter looks at just a few popular web statistics programs. All are based on similar principles, differing is the functionality and presentation of results. In most cases, when you make a contract for website hosting, your ISP will include the use of some stats program for free.

### 10.1. Web statistics – source of data

Web statistics can be generated by using source data of two types:

#### **Web server log files**

The web server stores data of all visits to your site, and these data are used web statistics programs such as [awstats](#) or [webalizer](#) .

### Advantages:

- This is the most efficient method from the point of view of the operational speed of the page,
- They are active almost continuously – even when execution of scripts is turned off in the browser
- some of these software programs are available many languages

### Drawbacks:

- usually the statistics software configuration can be done only by the server administrator,
- often the configuration is not simple,
- regular updates from the Internet are required,
- usually the options are more limited as compared to the Google Analytics online system.

Most of the drawbacks, however, are the concern of your server administrator. If your web site hosting company offers this service, it is easy to use it. If this is the case, it is not necessary to consider the following online services (like Google analytics) unless you want to learn its extended functionality.

### **Statistics posted from your web site by means of script**

A special script is inserted into your web site to post data to an online web statistics server. This requires that internal information is sent away outside your server and control, which poses a potential security risk. Such method is used in the [Google Analytics](#) web statistics program, which is maintained and regularly updated on the Google network of servers. All you have to do is to register as a Google user (all those having a Gmail.com e-mail address are automatically considered as Google

users), and you can register your home page in the Google Analytics site. After registration, you will see a script fragment to insert in the text of your home page. From then on the statistics will be automatically stored.

#### Advantages:

- server log files or special configuration on the server are not required
- the functionality is more advanced than the simple web statistics programs (like [awstats](#))

#### Drawbacks:

- it is possible to turn off the function of storing the statistics in the web browser, but this requires special skills and the option is seldom used
- it slows down (even if very little) the opening of the pages
- inserting the script in the page requires at least some technical knowledge, unless it has been provided for in advance
- the data are sent away outside of your domain for evaluation: a potential security risk
- at present, Google Analytics is only available in the most extended European languages, but not – for example – in Slovak.

Due to the drawbacks, we suggest using a web-based remote statistics program like Google Analytics only if your web hosting company does not offer any web statistics software, or the functionality offered does not suit your needs.

## 10.2. Understanding Web statistics – the terms used

Some terms that appear in the web statistics programs are difficult to understand.

First, one has to be aware that the Internet is based on special type of addresses (IP addresses) assigned to every computer which has been switched to the Internet. Unfortunately, each web site visit would not mean a unique IP address. Often, from the position of a web server, the same IP address is used by all users within a larger organisation. It happens, when the organisation uses the so called „internal“ network, which is not accessible from outside, and really one computer is used for Internet access.

What else complicates the process are the so called dynamic IP addresses – they are assigned for a limited period of time and later can be given to another user. This is a situation of practically all dial-up access or DSL users. Taking into account these restrictions, the web statistics program can not detect precisely the number of users having visited your home page, and special terms are used to assess the approximate numbers of visitors.

Some of the most frequent terms as they appear in the English interface, and what they mean:

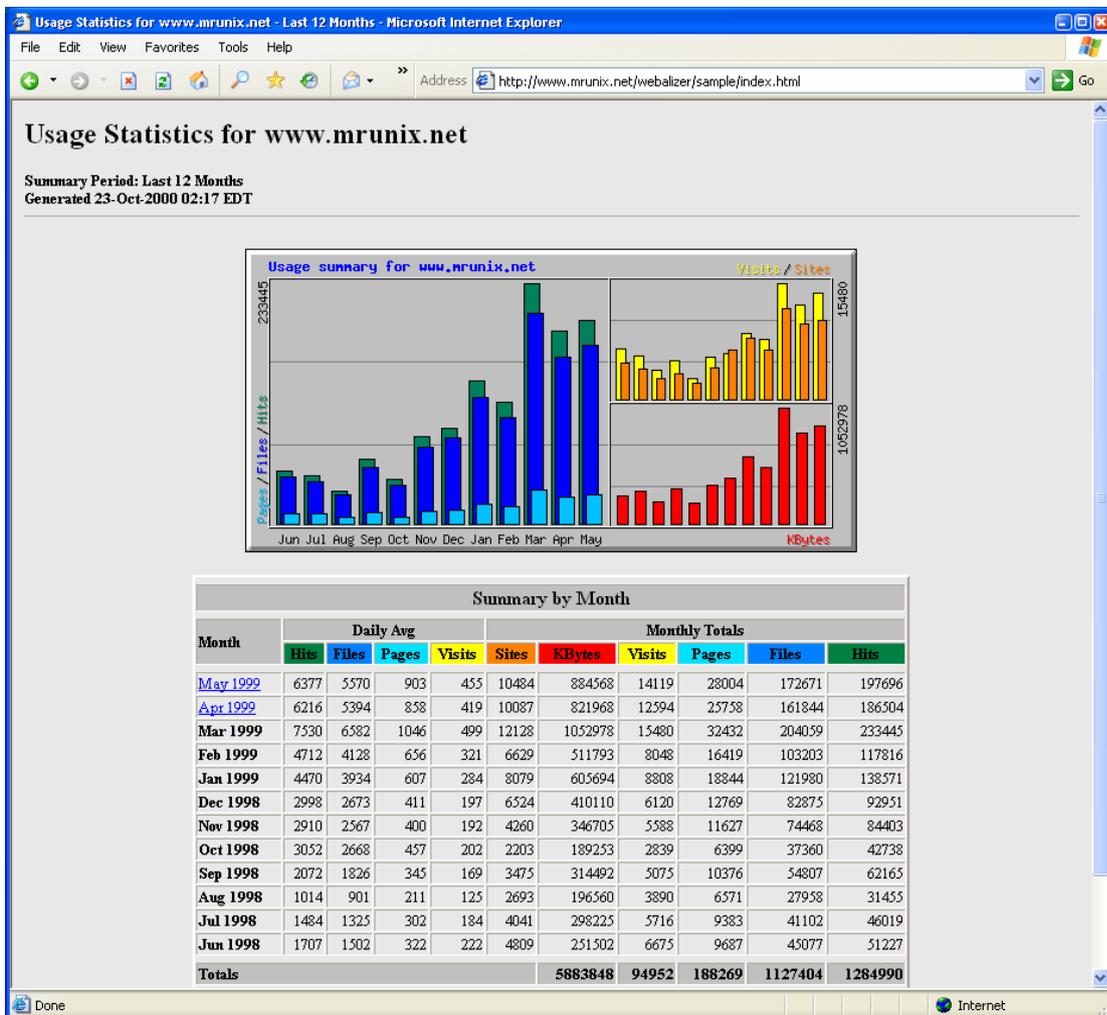
- **Unique visitors** – is not really a visitor but an IP address which has opened at least one page in your home page. It is most likely, that the number of real persons will be higher, but is possible also vice versa. In any case, this parameter will allow assessing the real numbers of visitors quite adequately.

- **Number of visits** – a visit is a visitor (IP address), having been in your site for a particular period of time (mostly within 60 minutes). If a visitor continues to view the site, it is regarded as the same visit. If the visitor leaves the page for 60 minutes and more and then comes back later – it will be regarded as a new visit.
- **Pages** – the pages of your web site which have been viewed. Each page consists of different elements (text, pictures, possible script files, web style sheets, etc.).
- **Hit** - not important parameter, from the point of view of a rural tourism provider. It tells how many different elements of the web site have been viewed altogether.
- **Bandwidth** – the total volume of data sent to web users viewing your pages. It may be important in cases when costs of hosting depend on the volume of the data posted.
- **Robots/Spiders** – these are special programs, viewing pages in automatic regime, usually to add them to search servers. These data can be of interest to you to see what search robots have been visiting your site in what time.

## 10.3. Web statistics software packages

### Webalizer

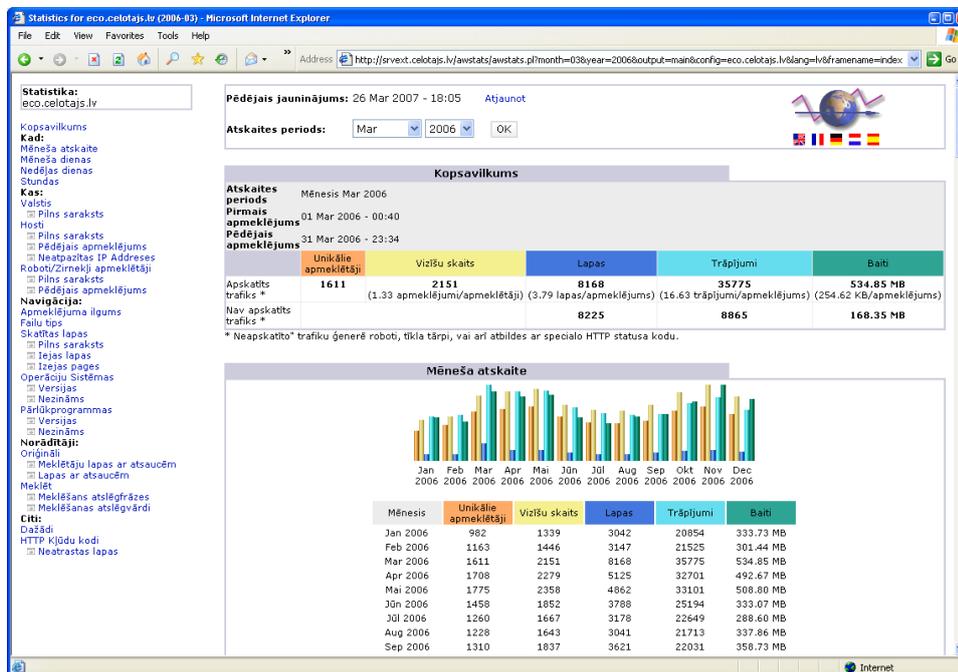
One of the first web statistics programs which is still today frequently found on web servers – it offers a very simple and clear statistics overview, however, it has limited possibilities as compared to more advanced programs:



## 27. Webalizer program statistics screen

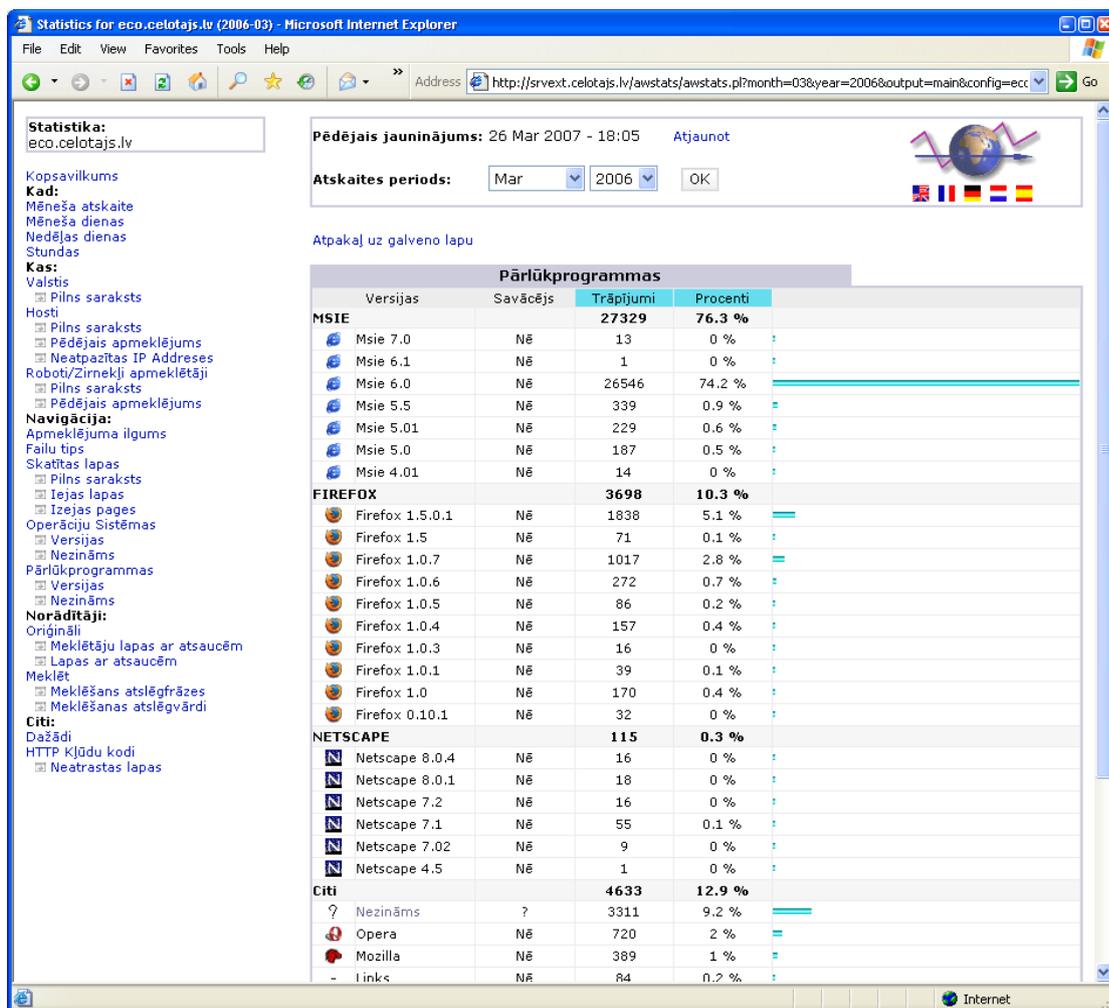
## Awstats

One of the best free web statistics programs, based on processing of server logs (in English and some other languages):



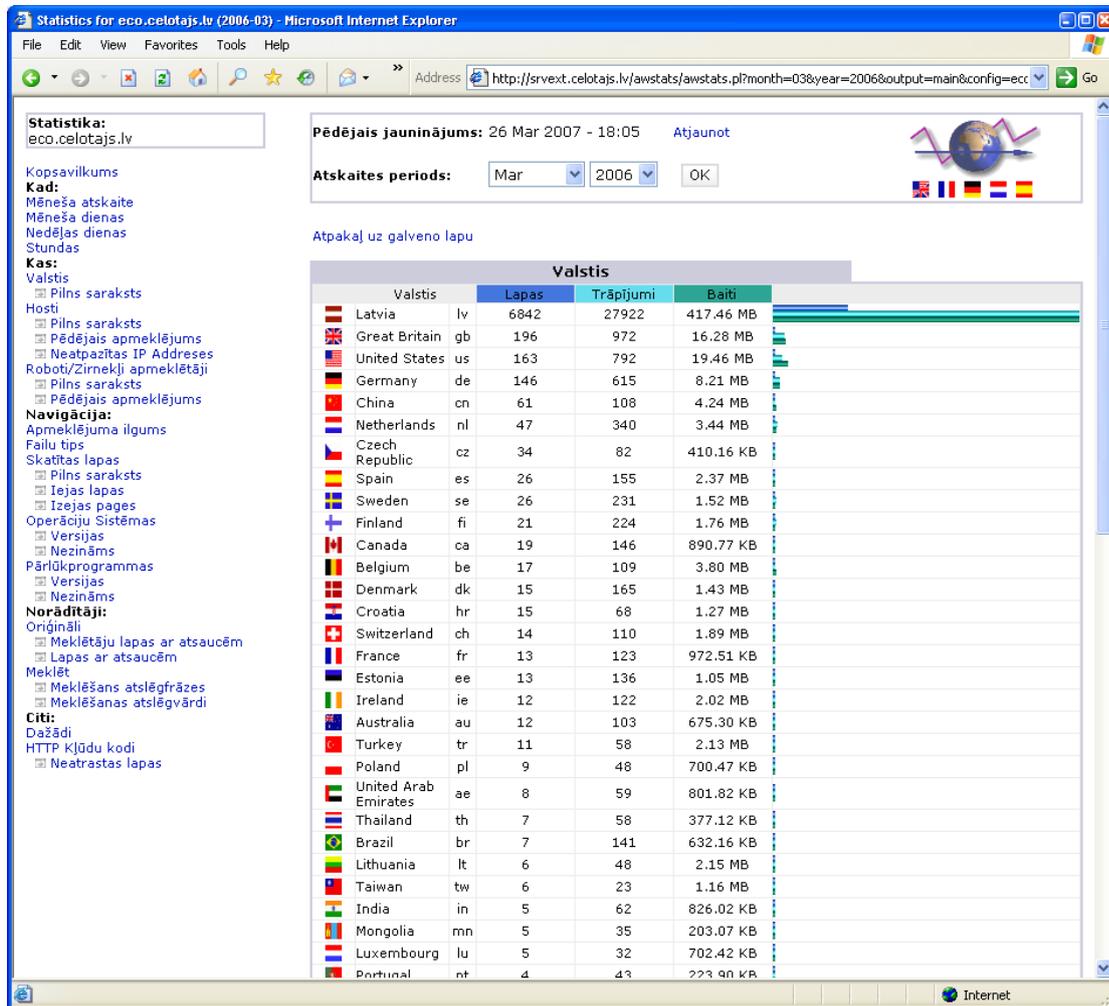
### 28. awstats program - main statistics screen

Many of the left side menu items offer extended information as seen in the below screen – the statistical data on the versions of web browsers used to view your web site. You, as a rural tourism provider, may not find these data very exciting, however, when one or another feature is added to your site, the differences of web browsers should be taken into account. It can be possible, that the new feature will not work with all browsers.



## 29. Browser statistics from awstats

Numbers of visitors by countries are probably of interest to every rural tourism provider:



Statistics for eco.celotajs.lv (2006-03) - Microsoft Internet Explorer

Address: http://srvext.celotajs.lv/awstats.pl?month=03&year=2006&output=main&config=ecc

Statistika: eco.celotajs.lv

Pēdējais jauninājums: 26 Mar 2007 - 18:05 Atjaunot

Atskaites periods: Mar 2006 OK

Atpakaļ uz galveno lapu

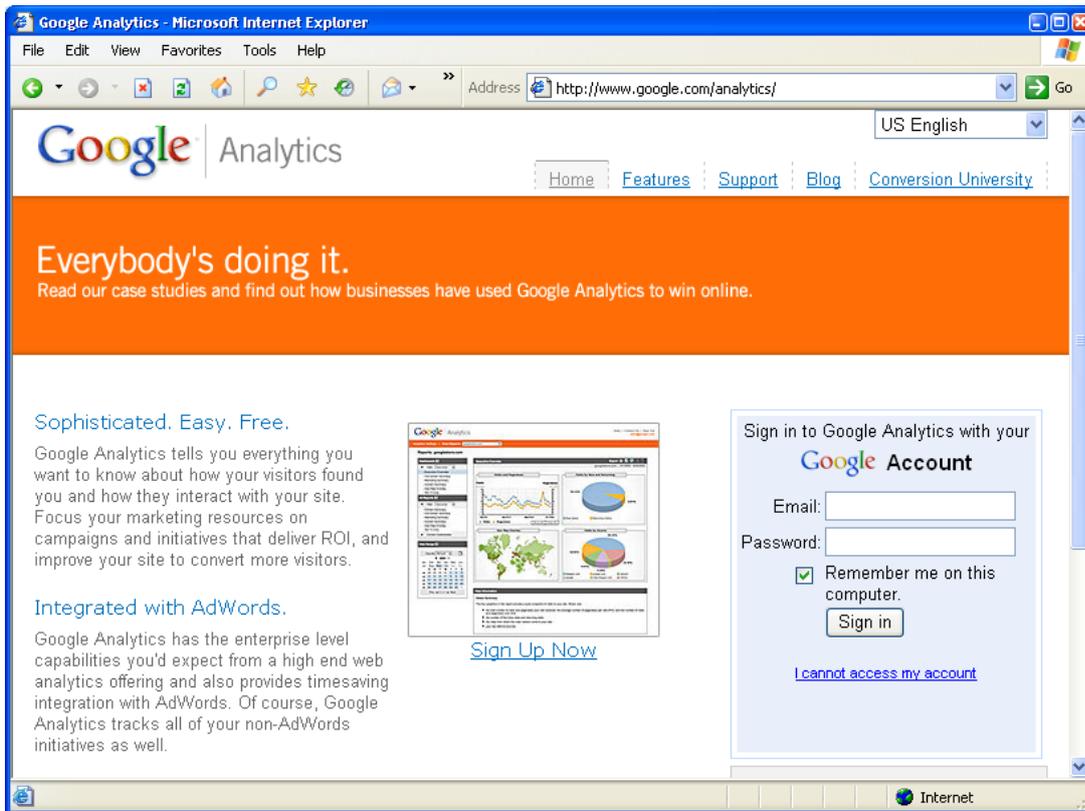
Valstis				
Valstis		Lapas	Trāpījumi	Baiti
Latvia	lv	6842	27922	417.46 MB
Great Britain	gb	196	972	16.28 MB
United States	us	163	792	19.46 MB
Germany	de	146	615	8.21 MB
China	cn	61	108	4.24 MB
Netherlands	nl	47	340	3.44 MB
Czech Republic	cz	34	82	410.16 KB
Spain	es	26	155	2.37 MB
Sweden	se	26	231	1.52 MB
Finland	fi	21	224	1.76 MB
Canada	ca	19	146	890.77 KB
Belgium	be	17	109	3.80 MB
Denmark	dk	15	165	1.43 MB
Croatia	hr	15	68	1.27 MB
Switzerland	ch	14	110	1.89 MB
France	fr	13	123	972.51 KB
Estonia	ee	13	136	1.05 MB
Ireland	ie	12	122	2.02 MB
Australia	au	12	103	675.30 KB
Turkey	tr	11	58	2.13 MB
Poland	pl	9	48	700.47 KB
United Arab Emirates	ae	8	59	801.82 KB
Thailand	th	7	58	377.12 KB
Brazil	br	7	141	632.16 KB
Lithuania	lt	6	48	2.15 MB
Taiwan	tw	6	23	1.16 MB
India	in	5	62	826.02 KB
Mongolia	mn	5	35	203.07 KB
Luxembourg	lu	5	32	702.42 KB
Portugal	pt	4	43	223.90 KB

### 30. Country statistics - awstats program

#### Google analytics

One of the best – and certainly the most used - online web statistics program. To use it, you will need a Google user name (for example from your Gmail account), then you can sign in from the Google analytics front page:

<http://www.google.com/analytics/>



**31. Google Analytics - login screen**

Each Google analytics user can register several websites for analysis:

**Analytics Settings - Girts Ziemelis** ([Edit Analytics Account](#))

From this page you can manage your website profiles, create custom or predefined filters, and control access to your Analytics reports.

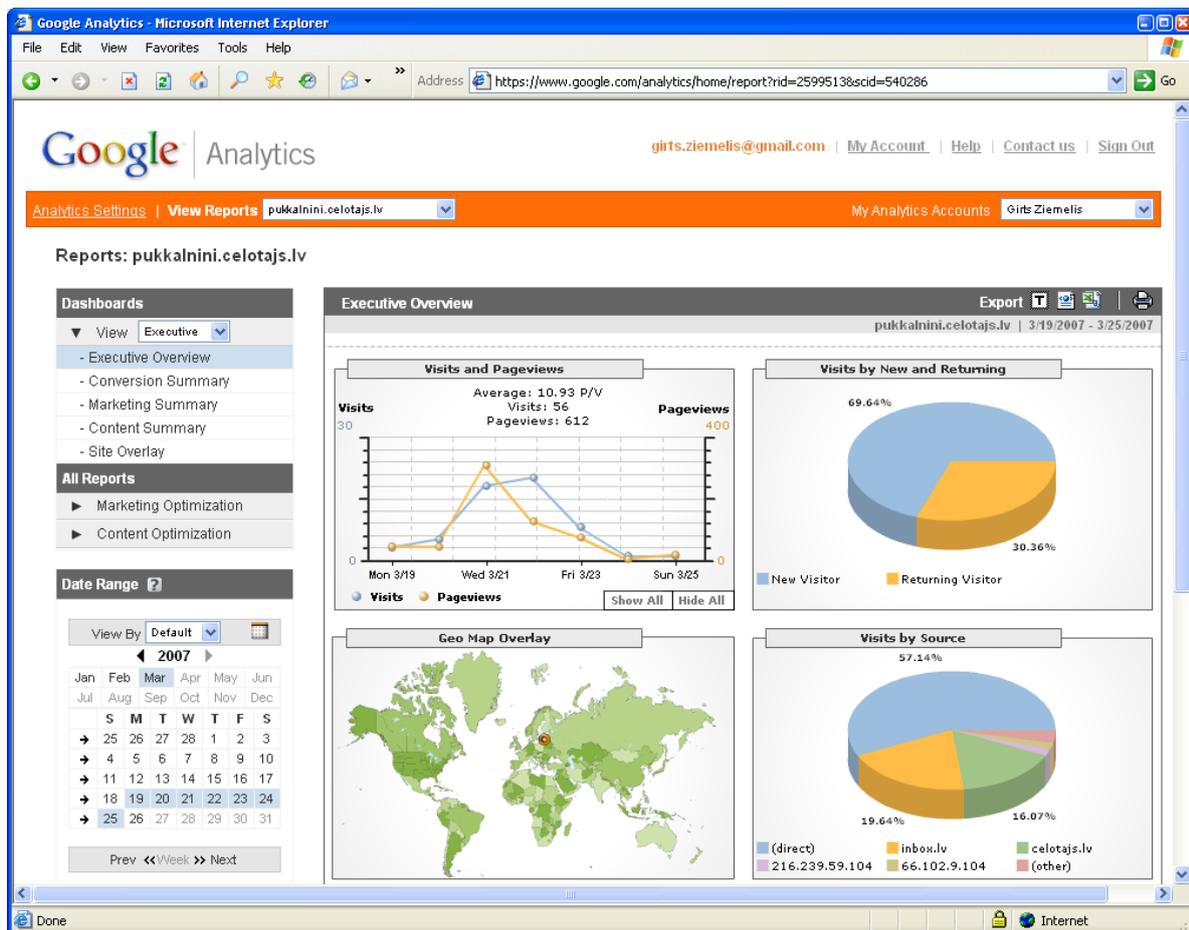
Website Profiles					+ Add Website Profile		
<<Prev 1 - 2 / 2 Next >>					Show 10	Search <input type="text"/>	 
Name	Reports	Settings	Delete	Status			
1. pukkalnini.celotajs.lv	<a href="#">View Reports</a>	<a href="#">Edit</a>	<a href="#">Delete</a>	✓ Receiving Data ⚠ Conversion Goals (0)			
2. www.celotajs.lv	<a href="#">View Reports</a>	<a href="#">Edit</a>	<a href="#">Delete</a>	✓ Receiving Data ⚠ Conversion Goals (0)			

 To track another website with Analytics, click the 'Add Website Profile' link.

**32. Google Analytics - site registration screen**

To have Google Analytics monitoring your website, you will have to insert a specially created code fragment in each of your registered pages. Once this is done, storing of statistics starts automatically. The green tick appearing by the title of the page and the text „receiving data” mean that the data are being received.

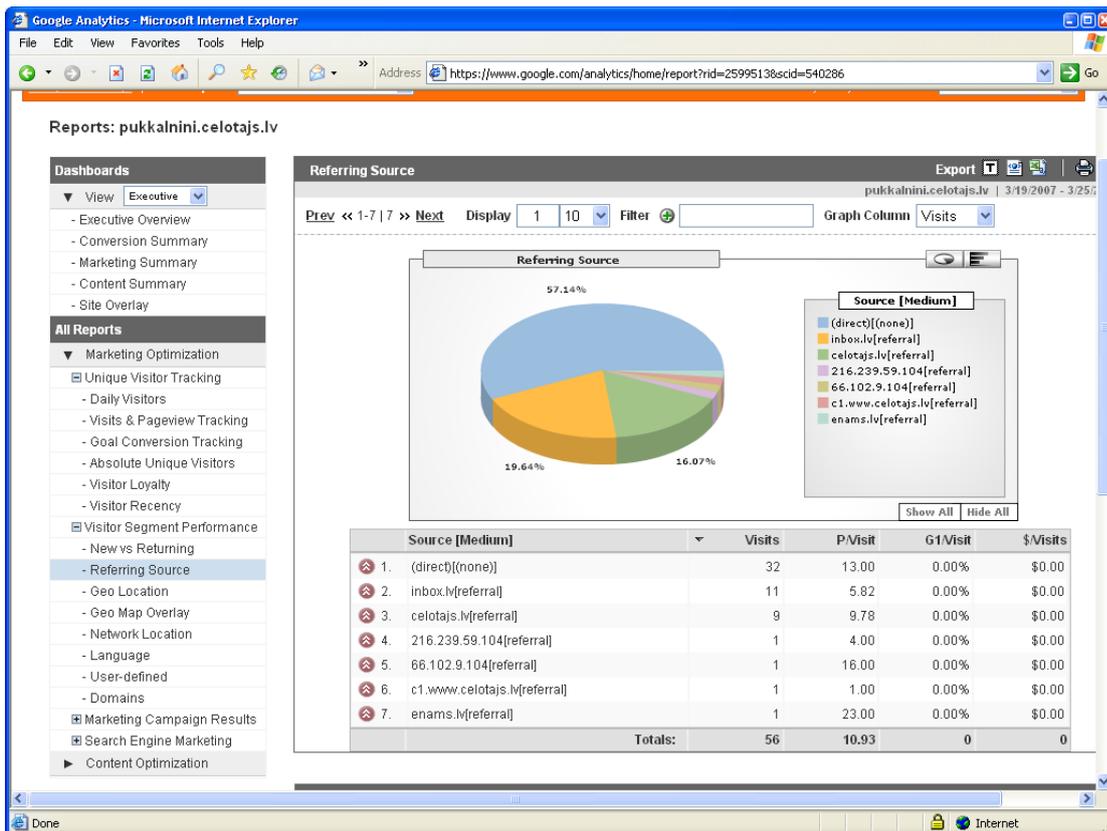
Different overviews and detailed information are available for each of your pages:



**33. Google analytics - main site statistics overview screen**

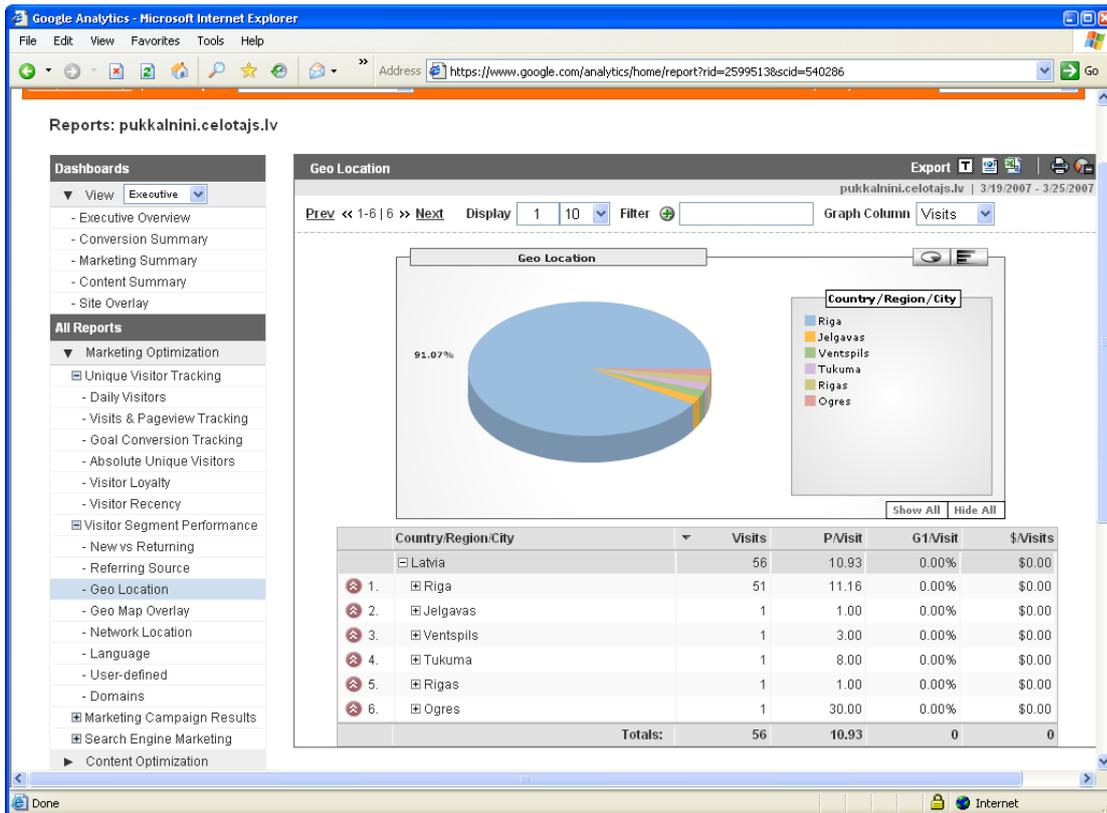
Many other recommendable reports are included in Google Analytics, as well as in most of the other programs that we presented above:

- The links from which your site receives of visitors.** This is the most interesting and valuable information, because it tells you which external link brings more potential customers. Through this list, you can also control and evaluate advert campaigns through banners or AdWords. If the sites that send visitors to you have themselves also high numbers of visitors, this means that their ratings in the search servers are high, which automatically increases also the rating of your website.



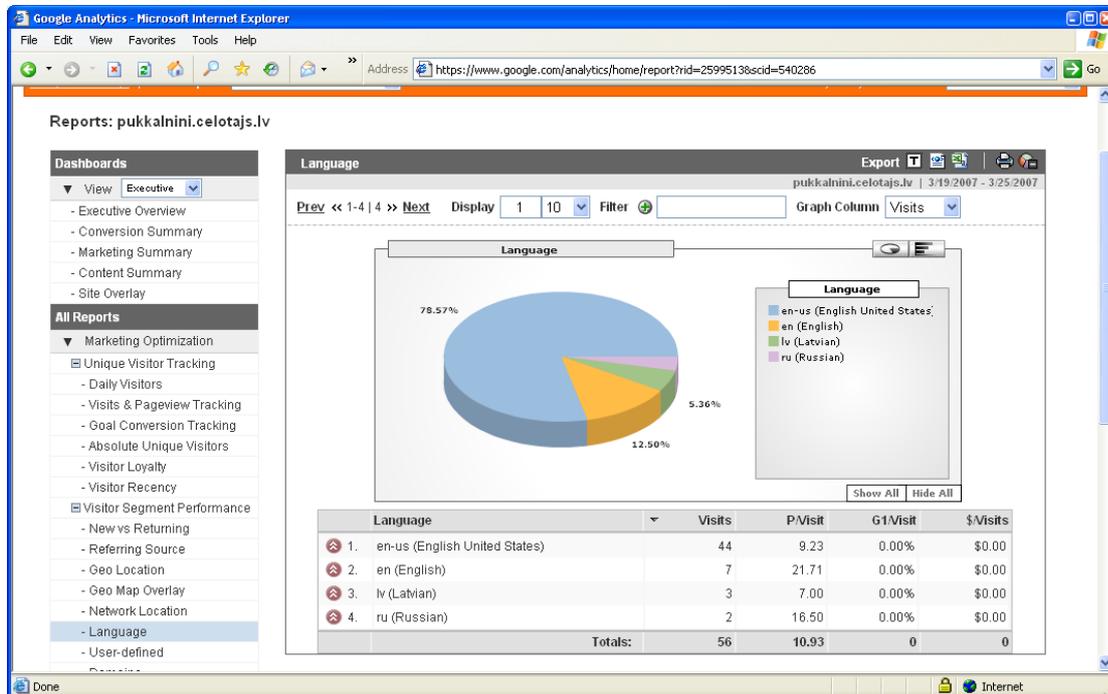
**34. Google Analytics - page referring source**

- **Your visitors' locations** – with Google Analytics you can find this not only by countries but also by districts of the country or even by districts of big cities. Sure, the overview by countries will be more useful:



### 35. Google Analytics - stats by country

- It is interesting to observe **statistics by languages** (namely, which is the language setup of the web browser). In many small countries, English is frequently used in parallel to national languages; however, the data regarding large countries (Spain, Germany, Russia, France, Poland, UK) represent truthful proportions and, based on these data, you can take a decision if it's worth translating your website in more languages, or if English would be sufficient:



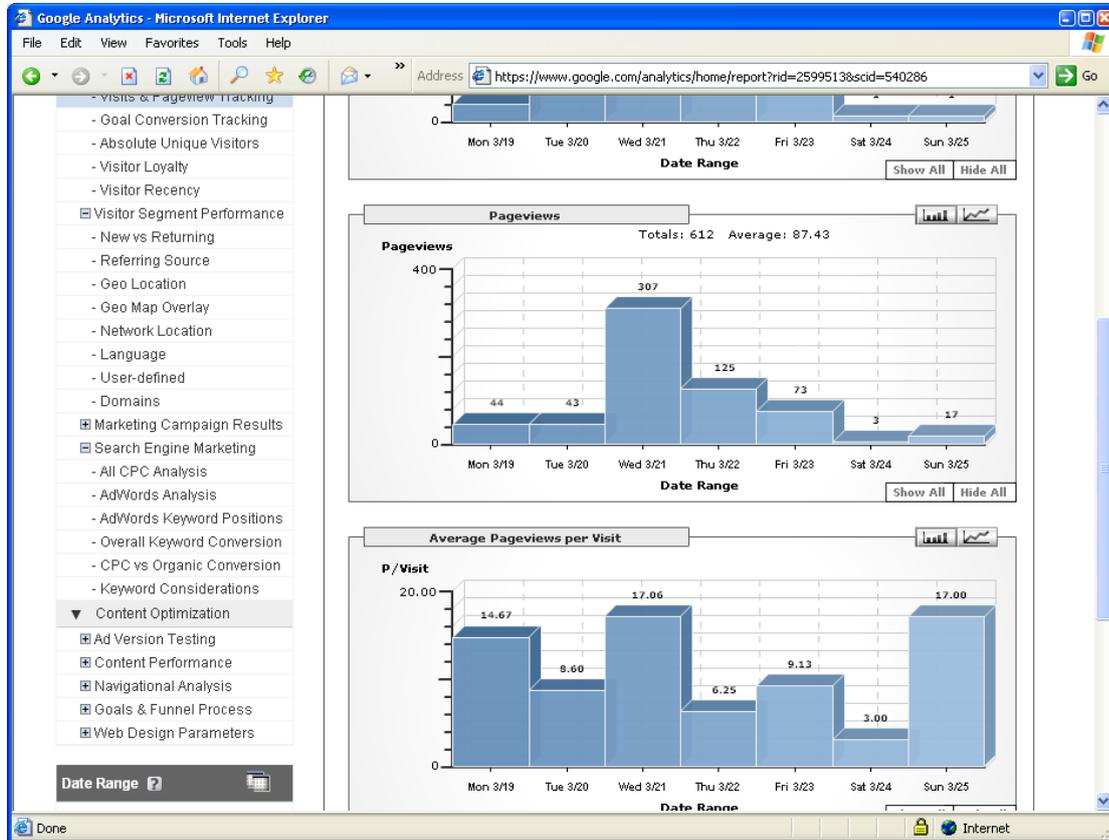
### 36. Google analytics - statistics by browser language

- Another interesting indication is the proportion of **pages viewed per visit**. Relating to the average length of the visit, you can make conclusions on how attractive the visitors find your site.

There are a lot more reports available in addition to those web statistics screens described here. Those seriously interested in web statistics analysis of their home page, should read about Google analytics here:

<http://www.google.com/support/analytics/>

It is available in English and bigger European languages, but not in Slovak.



### 37. Google Analytics - pages per visit statistics

MODULE	ITC SKILLS AND INTERNET
UNIT	LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS
LESSON	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 <b>11</b> 12

<b>UNIT 7</b>	<b>11. RESPONSIBILITIES AND RISKS IN THE MARKETING OF SERVICES</b>	<b>140</b>
	11.1. ADVERTISING	140
	<i>The legislation on Information Society services</i>	141
	11.2. RESPONSIBILITIES WHEN ADVERTISING SERVICES	143

## 11. RESPONSIBILITIES AND RISKS IN THE MARKETING OF SERVICES

### 11.1. Advertising

As far as country tourism operators are concerned who advertise their services, the advertising laws in most countries define the concept of advertising as *"any announcement or process which is aimed at promoting the popularity of or demand for goods or services (including real estate rights and obligations)."*

This definition includes not only the traditional advert in a newspaper, radio, or TV, but also the content of your own website and of those portals where you have paid for being included.

The aim of legislations in this field is generally:

- Regulate the preparation and dissemination of advertising, as well as to define the rights, obligations and responsibilities of those who are involved in preparing and disseminating advertising;
- Protect the interests of individuals and all of society in the area of advertising;
- Promote honest competition.

Advertising must be true and must not be misleading. This is mandatory for both print and for Internet advertising. Content of any advertising is binding for you if a reservation is made, and the client may suit you in court in case of incorrect publicity or information.

## The legislation on Information Society services

Legislation is very similar from country to country, at least within the European Union, because it is based on an EU Directive on the matter.

It mostly refers to E-mail and its use in distributing commercial messages. A common definition establishes

- **commercial messages** as any electronic announcement intended for direct or indirect advertising of goods or services, or for advertising the image of an organisation or individual engaged in commercial or business operations or regulated professional activities.
  
- **E-mail** is a service which allows computer users hooked up to an electronic communications network to send and receive messages.

As practical example, legislation in Latvia establishes regarding commercial messages and the requirements that apply to them:

- 1) They must be clearly identifiable as commercial messages;
- 2) The person in whose name the message has been disseminated must be clearly identified;
- 3) There must be a clear definition of the content of the relevant services and the requirements for receiving same;
- 4) Discounts, bonuses and prizes must be clearly identified, and rules for receiving them must be clearly described;

- 5) Advertising competitions, lotteries and games must be clearly identified, and the rules for same must be accessible and clearly and unambiguously explained;
- 6) The recipient of the service must be given a chance to refuse further commercial messages.

Limits are imposed on sending commercial messages and on the use of email lists:

- 1) Automatic diallers cannot be used to distribute commercial messages, nor can E-mail or fax systems which enable individual contacts with a service recipient who has not given free and clear agreement to receive the messages;
- 2) A service provider who has received E-mail addresses from service providers as a part of commercial operations may use these for other commercial messages if these relate to similar products or services from the service provider, the recipient of the services has not objected to the further use of his or her E-mail address, and the recipient of the services is given a clear and free chance to reject any further use of his or her E-mail address by submitting a request or sending an electronic message to that effect;
- 3) Other communications via publicly available electronic communications channels for the distribution of commercial messages are allowed if the recipient of services has given previous, free and unambiguous agreement to that effect (except

for instances referred to in the first and second section of this article);

- 4) E-mail cannot be used for commercial messages if the identity of the sender is hidden (even if the communications are on behalf of the sender), or if the E-mail address to which a recipient of the service could send a demand that communications be halted is not valid;
- 5) Each banned commercial message is an individual violation of the law.”

If you use E-mail to advertise your accommodation or any other service, such kind of requirements are mandatory for you even if your activity is not considered as commercial business. Make sure that your clients desire to receive electronic messages from you. This does not apply to ordinary E-mails correspondence, but only to advertising messages which are, usually, sent to a group of people simultaneously.

## **11.2. Responsibilities when advertising services**

In addition to the mandatory requirements described above, you must also keep in mind which information the client receives before he or she arrives at your accommodations and/or when he or she makes a reservation. This information becomes automatically part of the contracted services, regardless possible errors because you did not update data, texts, or prices.

To avoid problems, we recommend you that the following information should always be provided:

- Copy of the information about your accommodation or service that was delivered to the client before he made the reservations (print materials or Internet information)
- The reservation agreement should include a clear reference to the source of this information ("as described on the website xxx.yyy.zz"; "as described in the catalogue 2009 of organisation AABB", etc.)
- A clear statement about the type of accommodations
- A statement of internal rules or bans (smoking, pets)
- Months during which visitors are welcomed
- A description of how to arrive to the accommodation or service
- Rules on reservations
- Available services and activities
- Prices – updated, fixed and clearly stated

This information shall be available to clients when they make their reservations and when they arrive at your accommodations. If the information which the client received in advance proves to be false, then the reservation can be cancelled, and the deposit must be returned.

MODULE	ITC SKILLS AND INTERNET
ANNEX	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
LESSON	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 <b>12</b>

<b>ANNEX</b>	<b>12. GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>	<b>146</b>

## 12. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

### ICT and Internet – related terms

Term	Explanation
ADSL	Broadband (high speed) DSL connection with asymmetric transmission speed (download is considerably faster than upload)
Blog	Contraction of the term <i>weblog</i> . It is a type of mini-website, usually maintained by an individual, with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material. Very popular as interactive element on websites within the WEB 2.0 philosophy.
Browser	A program that allows reproducing Internet content based on WWW / HTML standards. It is run on the local (client) computer that accesses to Internet.
Chat	System or program that allows communicating through written text with one or several other Internet users that are connected at the same time. Most chat programs now also have the option to add video and sound to the conversation, and to exchange files between the participants.
Cibermarketing	Marketing on the Internet
Client	Computer that is connected to a server and uses the content (files, programs, and data) stored on this server.
Computer	Boxed device for data processing, consist of motherboard with processor and memory, monitor, keyboard, and mouse
Device	Single physical component that can be connected to, or configure, a computer system. See " <i>Hardware</i> "

<b>Term</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
DSL	Digital Subscriber Line – technology that allows fast data transmission over a standard telephone line with permanent connection. <i>See ADSL above</i>
e-mail	Electronic mail or e-mail or email is any method of creating, transmitting, or storing primarily text-based human communications with digital communications systems. Virtually any media format can be sent today, including attachments of audio and video clips.
Firefox	Web browser based on open source software
Forum	Online discussion site, managing user-generated content
FTP	File Transfer Protocol (FTP) is used to exchange and manipulate files over a computer network, such as the Internet. An FTP client program is used on the local PC to establish the connection and to manage the file transfer.
G3	Refers to mobile broadband technologies that allow transfer speeds of more than 7 MB / second.
Global Village	A popular, metaphoric term to describe the Internet integrating everybody on the world like a neighbour
GPRS	Mobile telephone connection that allows connecting to Internet without a landline. Almost in disuse due to low speed.
Hardware	Physical components of a computer system. Single hardware components are also called “device”
Host	A computer connected to the Internet. A network host can work as a client, a server, or both.
Hosting	Describes the storage of our own data, websites, internet domain, etc. on a remote server.
HTML	Programming language that is standard for writing web pages for the WWW. It admits hypertext and multimedia content.
http	Protocol used for the transfer of documents and files to be visualized on the WWW.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Internet Address	IP address that identifies in a unique way a specific computer that is connected to the Internet.
Internet Explorer	Web browser provided by Microsoft
IP telephone	Telephone connection based on IP, not on traditional telephone numbers. Some providers offer the possibility to connect from IP to normal landline numbers. Example: Skype
ISP	Internet Service Provider – the company that provides hosting services. Sometimes, this term is (incorrectly) applied to the company that only connects us with the internet but without further services.
Login	Process to enter on a website or directory that requires identification of the user; usually it consist of providing a valid username and a password.
Memory	Enables a computer to store, at least temporarily, data and programs. Standard size is 2 GB.
Modem	Historically, a device that enables two digital equipments to communicate over an analogue data connection. The term is now used generally for devices that enable communication between two equipments, even if the connection is also digital.
Monitor	Display screen of a computer. Minimum resolution is 1280 x 1024 pixels, recommended are 1680 x 1050.
Online Services	Services provided through Internet with immediate result of the operation; for example, registration as client, online shopping, flight booking, etc. Services that require human intervention for reply (for example, send an availability request for accommodation that will be answered next day) are not considered “online”
Portal	Website that combines several services, for example news, weather, email, publicity, etc. Usually portals are specialized by themes or refer to a limited territory.

Term	Explanation
Printer	A device that prints text or illustrations on paper
Processor	The "heart and brain" of computer where all data are processed
Protocol	Formal description of rules and formats that need to be observed in order to communicate between two computers.
Router	Hardware device that connects several computers or other net-enabled equipment into a local network. It also takes care for optimal speed of data traffic.
Scanner	A device that can read text or illustrations printed on paper and translate the information into a digital format the computer can use
Search Engine	Program that is run through the WWW and allows searching for content in the entire Internet. Based on keywords
Server	Computer that is connected to a network with other computers and provides central services such as FTP, email, software, etc. for them. On the Internet, "Server" is applied to the computer where the Internet and mail Server programs of a specific domain are installed. <i>See also "Host"</i>
Software	<p>Set of instructions that allow a computer to perform a specific task (the popular term is "program")</p> <p>Software is often divided into two categories:</p> <p><i>systems software:</i> Includes the operating system and all the utilities that enable the computer to function.</p> <p><i>applications software:</i> Includes programs that do real work for users. For example word processors, spreadsheets, and database management systems belong to this category.</p>
STN	Switched telephone Network – technical term for the traditional landline telephone connections

<b>Term</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
UPS	Uninterruptible power supply, a device that includes a battery to maintain power in the event of a power outage. Typically, a UPS keeps a computer running for several minutes, enabling you to shut down the computer without loss of data.
WAP	Technology used for Internet access by mobile phones
Web page	Page on the WWW based on HTML code. It can include text, sound, images, video, and links to other pages.
Web site	Coherent set of several web pages under the same domain name.
WEB 2.0	Concept that describes a "2nd generation" of Internet applications which allow interactive participation of the web user, e.g. by contribution with content to an existing website.
WWW	The most recognized, but not the only service provided by the Internet. Its popularity comes from the practical ease of use for creating and viewing websites.

For other terms or more detailed explanations, connect to <http://www.webopedia.com/>