

FORMATION OF A STRATEGY FOR PROVIDING CUSTOMER-ORIENTED TOURIST SERVICES

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ABSTRACT

The ways of improving communication with customers and increasing confidence in the process of providing travel services were justified: improving the quality of services, the use of Internet marketing, adjusting the staff motivation system. A strategy for providing customer-oriented travel services based on improving communication with customers and accounting values was developed. The strategy is to focus on improving services, their parameters, making full use of quality characteristics. As a result, the travel company will be able to optimize financial performance, improve innovative products and improve the level of service. This will allow the growth of the client base and the strengthening of the rating of travel companies.

Keywords: Strategy, Tourism Services, Customer Satisfaction, Loyalty, Employee Incentives.

JEL Classifications: M21

INTRODUCTION

In modern conditions, there is a continuous improvement of the methods and techniques of competition and the expansion of the range of tourism services. Since the efficiency of the tourism sector affects the development of the national economy, research is being updated on the development of effective and flexible strategies for the activities of travel companies in the international market. The choice of customers and their loyalty to travel companies is formed under the influence of a significant number of price and non-price factors.

In modern conditions, there is a continuous improvement of the methods and techniques of competition and the expansion of the range of tourism services, especially in the segment of international services. Since the efficiency of the tourism sector affects the development of the national economy, research is being updated on the development of effective and flexible strategies for the activities of travel companies.

Thus, communication with clients and building trust in the process of providing tourism services today is one of the key tools for ensuring the efficient operation of travel companies in the international market, which determines the choice of the topic of study.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS STUDIES

The system of measures when implementing a strategy for the provision of tourism services varies depending on the type of concept used by the travel company. The following

concepts are distinguished: service concept (applied at a low level of customer income, relative balance in the market of tourism services) (Antón et al., 2017); parametric concept (realization of highly profitable services for travel companies: innovative and unique) (Drobyazko et al., (2019a & b); commercial concept (based on the ability to significantly increase the level of customer attraction and the volume of sales of services) (Hallak et al., 2018); targeted concept (development of special offers for specific target groups of customers, taking into account their needs) (Campón-Cerro et al., 2017); socio-political (taking into account socio-economic and political risks identified on the basis of a situational analysis) (Hilorme et al., 2019a). An important aspect of the activities of travel companies should be the formation of values in the process of providing tourism services. Factors that shape values are: characteristics of goods and services (functionality, price and quality characteristics), while the value of tourism products and services depends on the preferences and expectations of customers (Hilorme et al., 2019b); relationship with customers (the process of selling tourism products and providing services: service time, impressions of cooperation, long term relationships) (Nedelea et al., 2017); brand image and reputation (attitude to various groups of stakeholders, timely response to customer requests, customer satisfaction from previous experience of cooperation, which form customer trust and loyalty) (Su et al., 2017).

METHODOLOGY

In order to achieve this goal, methods of logical and comparative analysis, the dialectic method, an integrated and systematic approach, and the method of expert survey, tabular and graphical image of the data were used. Additionally, we used: Methods of system-structural analysis, induction and deduction, abstraction and analogy - to reflect the relationship of the consumer value of tourism services and enterprise development strategies; operational and strategic analysis methods - to assess the possibility of adaptation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The analysis allows us to develop a strategy for providing customer-oriented tourism services based on improving communication with customers and taking into account values (Fig. 1). The strategy is to focus on improving services, their parameters, making full use of quality characteristics. As a result, the travel company will be able to optimize financial performance, improve innovative products and improve the level of service. This will allow the growth of the customer base and the strengthening of the company's rating.

The following tools can be used to establish close relationships with customers:

- Use of material incentives (use of discounts, introduction of benefits for profitable customers);
- Moral stimulation (the study of the needs, preferences of customer and the offer of individualized goods oriented to a specific customer);
- Creation of structural relations that would facilitate interaction with the buyer (providing customers with electronic communications to simplify the system of ordering services, etc.).

It is important to understand that the perception of the value of services is different for a travel company and a client, and the level of satisfaction with cooperation depends on their balance (Figure 1).

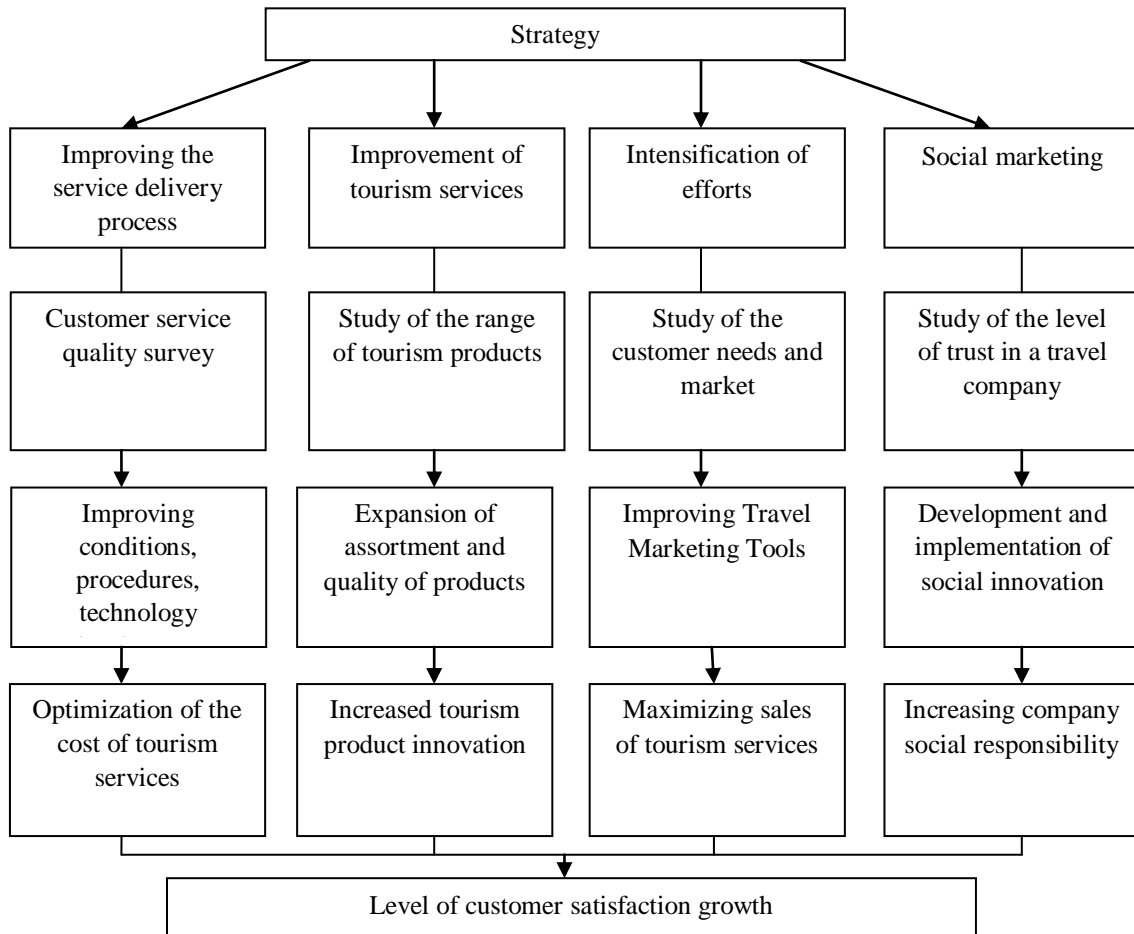


FIGURE 1
STRATEGY FOR PROVIDING CUSTOMER-ORIENTED TRAVEL SERVICES
(AUTHORING)

The value of a service in the process of providing services consists of the following elements:

1. Values of the goal established by the travel company in the provision of products and services should meet the expectations and needs of customers and/or offer the best solution to its problems;
2. Values of the form of the provision of services (the ability to choose a term, currency or additional services);
3. Place and time values (the ability to use electronic access services, new distribution channels that can save the client’s time and reduce his expenses);
4. Communication values, providing mutual timely provision of reliable information, the ability to receive feedback on needs, preferences and level of satisfaction;
5. Brand experience values based on rational and emotional indicators.

Summarizing all of the above, it is advisable to consider communication with customers as an integrated approach to managing tourism activities aimed at effectively meeting the needs of customers and society through the targeted use of marketing tools.

In the condition of environmental changes, it is necessary to constantly improve the tools for popularizing tourism services. However, the possibility of their effective use depends on the

level of customer confidence in travel companies. In our opinion, trust in the tourism sector is the basis for the stable development of companies, which is formed on the mutual respect of stakeholders in both short-term and long-term relationships.

Accordingly, the formation of loyalty and the restoration of confidence in domestic travel companies are a prerequisite for strengthening the sustainability of the tourism sector, which will ensure a balanced development of the national economy. The customer loyalty model (Dick and Basu model), adapted for the tourism sector, and is given in Table 1.

Table 1			
DICK AND BASU LOYALTY MODEL ADAPTED FOR THE TOURISM SECTOR			
		Frequency of service delivery	
		High	Low
Trust level	High	Real loyalty: low motivation to consider alternative services; high level of sustainability of consumption of selected brands; high probability of the spread of positive reviews.	Hidden loyalty: providing a strong advantage to the brand/service; the motive is situation and environmental factors.
	Low	Fictitious loyalty: the client does not feel the difference between the brands; the motive for choosing services is habit.	Lack of loyalty: the client feels the differences between the brands; the motive is random selection.

Source: Systematized by the authors

Depending on the level of trust and the frequency of receiving tourist services, it is customary to distinguish four types of loyalty: real, hidden, fictitious loyalty, as well as lack of loyalty. Particular attention should be paid to clients with hidden loyalty, as it can be caused not only by individual limiting factors (limited financial resources, lack of time, etc.), but also by external ones that depend on travel companies (high cost of services, limited access, lack of awareness of services, etc.). Therefore, it is necessary to provide stimulation of demand of the aforementioned customers through various marketing programs and minimize the negative impact of external factors at the level of tourism sector entities. At the same time, studies of the level of customer confidence, as well as identification of the reasons for changing its level, are mandatory. In our opinion, when forming the level of trust not only of clients, but also of other interested parties (personnel, partners, media, society, etc.), it is advisable to apply the concept of business social responsibility.

The study shows that trust in the tourism sector is the main prerequisite for the provision of tourism services and it is formed on a bilateral basis between stakeholders. Thus, with a fairly high level of trust, travel companies can use a set of tools to popularize tourism services.

Therefore, taking into account the experience of the EU in the formation of non-financial and integrated reports, we consider it appropriate to introduce the concepts of social responsibility into the practice of the tourism sector, as well as its reflection in non-financial reports. We believe that in the context of increased competition in the tourism services market, the formation and conduct of socially responsible activities will attract potential customers, partners and investors, as well as increase confidence and loyalty to the sector.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A recommended tool for promoting tourism services is employee motivation. After all, the features of work in the field of sales of tourism products, the individual characteristics of each employee, the variety of goals of the company, the constant changes in the economic environment make the motivation of sellers of travel services quite a difficult and important task.

Top managers of the companies agree that the motivation of the personnel involved in the sale of retail services plays an important role in their implementation. For a successful, profitable, efficient conduct of business, it is necessary to develop an effective staff motivation system.

CONCLUSIONS

Improving the quality of tourism services reflects the focus of all participants in business processes on the end consumer. Since in the service sector, assessing the quality of a service is inseparable from the assessment of its provider, this is reflected in the tourism market in the fact that: the quality of tourism services is related to the financial situation, popularity, ranking position, brand, prestige of the company's office; the quality of services is determined by the culture of service in the process of registration, maintenance and, of course, the settlement of losses; quality management is applicable only to organizations working on the principle of conscientious fulfillment of their obligations, and is able to ensure the optimal matching of the interests of customers, managers and staff, owners and employees. This optimum will eliminate the conflict of interests of all participants in the tourism business; will guarantee its reliability in the long term.

Thus, travel companies in order to increase their competitiveness in the market of tourism services, must achieve an increase in the efficiency of staff; reduction in the cost of services; optimization of business process management; increase their ratings.

The theoretical foundations of providing customer-oriented tourism services were disclosed. It was established that an important aspect of the activities of travel agencies should be the formation of values in the process of providing services. Factors that form values are: characteristics of goods and services; customer relationships; brand image and reputation.

We believe that the stages of the process of providing customer-oriented tourism services are formed under the influence of existing market demand; need to optimize tourism products; planning the activities of travel companies; development of sales policy; companies' image development. The determination of functions made it possible to clearly define the role of customer-oriented tourism services in the implementation of effective activities.

Thus, the positive image of travel companies forms its perception as a profitable, stable and reliable institution, which fully fulfills its obligations to all interested parties in providing quality services in the long term.

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