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MARKETING AND NETWORK TOOLS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CREATIVE RURAL TOURISM: POSSIBILITIES OF EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE IMPLEMENTATION IN UKRAINE

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“Customer relationship management” has been examined in the article. The main advantages of its applications have been revealed. The cases illustrating marketing efficiency, products supply, its strengths and weaknesses, the necessity of marketing decision-making, as well as the importance of the resource calculation have been presented using European experience and knowledge. Groups of destinations in rural tourism having specific marketing approaches aimed at the formation of an individual tourists` experience have been singled out, namely “visual” attractions characterized as passive and “viewing”, “buying” attractions designed to form the idea to purchase a memory about visited rural destinations, and “visit/act” attractions built to support tourists desire for self-development through new skills and abilities gained in rural areas. “High” attractions and “spatial” attractions have been studied as current marketing ways of doing effective rural tourism business. It has been emphasized that branding and ICT, as well as the priority of human capital in rural tourism business policies, are the integral part of doing business both in Ukraine and in other European countries. It has been identified that cooperative partner behaviour, networking means the union of numerous participants aimed at mutual dialogue, including local traditions and cultural identity preservation; infrastructure development quality of life support through interactive network communication. The concept of coopetition has been analyzed as a contemporary approach to business cooperation development, which could be used in rural tourism too. The idea of cooperation and competition could be used at different economic levels for different reasons. The areas of competition and cooperation have been defined too. The necessity of applying the concept of network behaviour has been pointed out. Regional platforms and their success cases have been studied as the bases for their further implementation in Ukraine.

МАРКЕТИНГОВІ ТА МЕРЕЖЕВІ ІНСТРУМЕНТИ ДЛЯ РОЗВИТКУ КРЕАТИВНОГО СІЛЬСЬКОГО ТУРИЗМУ: МОЖЛИВОСТІ ВПРОВАДЖЕННЯ ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКОГО ДОСВІДУ В УКРАЇНІ

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сільський туризм, маркетинг,
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нетворкінг,
кооперативна поведінка

У статті розглянуто поняття «управління взаємовідносинами з клієнтами». Розкрито основні переваги його застосування. Наведено кейси, що ілюструють ефективність маркетингу, пропозиції продукції, її сильні та слабкі сторони, необхідність прийняття маркетингових рішень, а також важливість калькуляції ресурсів на основі європейського досвіду та знань. Виокремлено групи дестинацій у сільському туризмі, які мають специфічні маркетингові підходи, спрямовані на формування індивідуального досвіду туриста, а саме «візуальні» атракції, що характеризуються як пасивні та «оглядові», «купівельні» атракції, спрямовані на формування ідеї придбання «пам'яті» про відвідані сільські напрямки, а також пам'ятки «відвідайте/дійте», створені для підтримки бажання туристів до саморозвитку шляхом доступу до нових навичок і здібностей, отриманих у сільській місцевості. «Високі» пам'ятки та «просторові» пам'ятки досліджувалися як сучасні

маркетингові способи ведення ефективного бізнесу в сфері сільського туризму. Було наголошено, що брендинг та ІКТ, а також пріоритет людського капіталу в бізнес-політиці сільського туризму є невід'ємною частиною ведення бізнесу як в Україні, так і в інших країнах Європи. Встановлено, що кооперативна партнерська поведінка, нетворкінг означає об'єднання багатьох учасників з метою взаємного діалогу, включаючи збереження місцевих традицій та культурної ідентичності; розвиток інфраструктури, забезпечення якості життя через інтерактивне мережеве спілкування. Концепція кооперації проаналізована як сучасний підхід до розвитку ділового співробітництва, який може бути використаний також у сільському туризмі. Ідея співпраці та конкуренції може бути застосована на різних економічних рівнях з різноманітних причин. Крім того, було визначено сфери конкуренції та співпраці. Вказано на необхідність застосування концепції мережевої поведінки. Досліджено регіональні платформи та кейси їх успіху як основи для їх подальшого впровадження в Україні.

Problem statement

Consumer needs are rapidly changing, so entrepreneurs must be flexible enough to meet the needs offering appropriate economic benefits. The field of rural tourism is no exception. Entrepreneurs use a variety of tools, for example, marketing and networking, to align potential demand with their business goals. These instruments are the key to the successful development of rural tourism. One should mention that marketing and cooperative relationship promote mutual understanding and strengthen stakeholders' loyalty, help to obtain synergistic effects as a result of interaction, provide access to external development resources as well.

Analysis of recent research and publications

Marketing and network cooperative instruments of market relations development are the subject of interest of contemporary scholars both in Ukraine and abroad [1; 2; 3; 4; 5]. Tourism organizations discuss the problem as well [6].

Study objective

The article's objective is to study and analyze current tools used by rural tourism market players to improve their market position; to present the perspectives of marketing and network tools application in Ukraine based on best European cases.

Main material

Nowadays, entrepreneurs seek for special marketing, the one which is integrated into the management system of mutually beneficial relations with customers, so called "customer relationship management". Applying the principles of modern marketing to create supply helps entrepreneurs operating in the field of rural tourism to focus on the market segments, which could comprehensively satisfy tourists demand. There is a vivid example of building marketing relations with potential consumers – a Farm Stay UK. It's a consortium in Great Britain, which includes farmers who provide self-catering, glamping, B&B services for rural tourists. The consortium implements a multi-level marketing approach. A central office is responsible for marketing policy (national level), while local initiative groups and individual farms implement marketing at the local level [7].

One should mention, that marketing in rural tourism is used to answer the following questions:

- 1) the effectiveness of multi-level marketing;
- 2) correct application of marketing tools at different levels regarding the tourist products supply;
- 3) strengths and weaknesses of supply;
- 4) marketing decision-making;
- 5) resources' abundance or deficit to meet the needs of consumers.

There are three groups of destinations in rural tourism having specific marketing approaches aimed at the formation of an individual tourists' experience:

1) "visual" attractions (passive, "viewing"): visiting museums, churches, memorials. New rural tourists should follow the new marketing slogan "look, explore and think". The passive "viewing" is being substituted by the attractions with active participation, like sheepdog competitions [8], live role-playing games in ancient castles, riding on steam trains, and participation in village weddings;

2) the idea of "buying" attractions. Rural tourists spend more money for souvenir products, products made by local artisans, local food and drinks as a part of a consumer society tradition. To extend the demand the mentioned above goods should have a clear local identity, convey a sense of place and create a desire to return. For entrepreneurs in the field of rural tourism, branding their products is a way of integration into the local market. The European rural tourism market is known for the organization of farmers' markets, shops, craft fairs, exhibitions and centers of rural crafts, shops selling local products of rural producers. The places are effectively integrated into the rural tour routes of the European countries;

3) "visit/act" attractions are aimed at supporting the special interest of rural tourists in self-development and health, providing them with the opportunity to form new skills and abilities in their free time in rural areas. Activities of this type are either directly linked to rural areas, based on local identity (hot air balloon flights, orienteering, kayaking, and local cooking courses) or use rural environment as a backdrop to offer niche products (copywriting, painting, and yoga courses). Numerous "visit / act" attractions are concentrated in the Artist gardens of Tuscany (Italy). These are the places where artists from all over the world create their works and place them along

a certain route in the garden. Artists experiment (e. g. with local materials), communicate with their colleagues and live for a time on site within the garden. Artist gardens provide an opportunity for young artists to realize their ideas. Conferences and trainings are held here too [9].

Modern marketing in rural tourism divides promotion of rural travel into two types:

- “high” attractions;
- “spatial” attractions [10].

“High” attractions include towers, such as town halls, watchtowers, and castle towers. “Spatial” attractions are part of walking, bus, and horseback excursions. The combination of two types of attractions initiates rural tourists to seek additional impressions, sensations, and experience through participation in activities in rural areas. Entrepreneurs working in the field of rural tourism traditionally combine “high” and “spatial” attractions to expand the supply, and reduce vulnerability of rural tourism market participants.

Branding is an important component of rural tourism marketing. Since branding covers all levels of rural tourism products positioning, it should not be forgotten that it is local brands, which are very vulnerable, they often lack the transfer of an emotional connection between the area they represent and the consumer. Thus, local brands are not only a logo and a slogan, but also a location embodied in the product (mansion, forest, forge, etc.), and its unique atmosphere.

Success factors of branding strategies in the rural tourism market should be considered comprehensively, taking into account both the destination’s logo and slogan development, as well as the development of relationships with stakeholders, involving local community into effective cooperation and conducting an active policy of the brand’s information dissemination.

Rural tourism offers products, which are often spatially distant or isolated from potential consumers, so entrepreneurs use a variety of ICTs, such as websites, and social networks, to reduce distance and dependence on intermediaries. Modern systems based on ICT offer alternative methods of mailing to traditional methods. The “click and brick” tool makes it possible to first contact potential tourists via the Internet in order to provide them with information about rural tourism destinations (the “click” element), and then to use typical telephone / mail systems (the “brick” element”).

Entrepreneurs should pay attention to quality assurance systems for click-and-brick content to maintain trust among travel consumers.

ICT is an opportunity to creatively use modern methods of reaching a large audience of consumers and improving the business practices of entrepreneurs engaged in rural tourism. An example of the unusual positioning of a rural area in the international music and dance market is a Herräng village in Sweden. The festival gathers every year fans of dance, the middle class. Communication of the festival brand is carried out mainly by the “click” method, with the help of information technologies, as well as through informal communication networks of music and dance fans. The “online community” promotes sustainability and brand awareness.

Effective marketing in rural tourism cannot be an isolated idea of one organization. Only cooperative partner behaviour gives opportunity to lead successful sustainable business. Cooperative partner behaviour involves the union of numerous participants and a continuous dialogue between them; preservation of local traditions and cultural identity of the involved; restoration and use of architectural and landscape heritage by real estate owners; modernization of infrastructure based on the principle of environment preservation and quality of life support; popularization of new cultural and recreational spaces; use of the latest technological resources and means of interactive network communication.

Joint efforts of the rural tourism market players have a number of advantages, including:

A. Training and exchange of knowledge (transfer of knowledge, education in the field of tourism; communication; development of new cultural values; of initiatives acceleration by the agents of change; promotion of small business);

B. Business activities (cooperative activities, e. g. marketing, procurement, production; needs-based motivational approaches, e. g. staff development, policies to increase the number of visitors; effective use of small businesses’ and agencies’ resources; extension of the tourist season; stimulation of entrepreneurial activity and intra-network trade; improved product quality and improved visitor experience; greater opportunities for business development);

C. Community (union of a common goal and specialization; community support for the destinations development; higher sense of community; small businesses involvement into the destinations’ development; income localization [11].

Market formation and functioning, the environment for joint actions coordination and the establishment of transparent and effective common “rules of the game” are the basis of the development of healthy cooperative behaviour. Partnerships between the main rural tourism market players open up new opportunities for the development of management and marketing of rural tourism destinations. Participants of partnerships in the areas related to the development of a tourist product [12] stimulate the development and conservation of resources; contribute to the quality standards; initiate new attractions, theme parks and tourist accommodation; provide technical support to innovative product development programmes; invest into the community’s economic wealth; spread ideas of sustainable development in the tourism sector; find tools to overcome obstacles in the sphere of trade and investment; protect consumers; build relations with competitors.

Partnership cooperative relations in marketing and sales improve destination’s image; increase the effectiveness of marketing policy; rise market reach; provide support for electronic marketing tools distribution; motivate participation in fairs, exhibitions, etc.; strengthen joint marketing programmes; stimulate technological innovations and their application. It is important to focus on R&D and technology of partnership members, because they provide methodology to measure the effectiveness of

rural tourism market activities, calculate indirect income (satellite accounts of tourism); induce technological changes and their application.

Partnership participants give a lot of attention to infrastructure too, because their joint efforts improve transport infrastructure and related services, health care and sanitary conditions in the communities; increase tourists' safety; strengthen ICT position in rural areas.

Human capital is the greatest asset of partnerships. The rural tourism players provide training, create educational programmes; tourist products standards and their quality are being ensured; labour productivity and innovation rate rise.

One should mention that market players involved in partnerships require financial capital as well to invest and maintain financial assets' stability; to complement state investments; to support initial financial initiatives and improve economic performance.

"Slow Food" is a booming cooperative and marketing idea of a global organization in more than 160 countries working to ensure access to good, clean and fair food around the world. Members of the association consider consumers to be "co-producers", that is, active participants, because their food choices affect not only the food industry in particular, but also the planet as a whole. The association supports high-quality ingredients, sustainable and ecological farming methods and affordable prices. "Slow Food" association is located in Tuscany (Italy). Its members pay special attention to the preservation of food traditions, support small high-quality producers which could cease to exist, rejuvenate old professions, including traditional food production, and make efforts to preserve local, ancient varieties of vegetables and fruits. "Città Slow" is a related association, which promotes cities providing the opportunity to enjoy products and services easier and more pleasant life [13]. Associations maintain close ties with both local producers and government officials. The Slow Food Experiences programme provides an opportunity to learn local recipes from villagers.

As marketing strategies and methods of cooperative partnership behaviour are being developed, their new forms emerge. The most developed form is regional development platform. The platform is an innovation policy tool aimed at planning and implementing a regional innovation system capable of creating a sustainable and long-term (regional) competitive advantage. Currently platforms of the kind exist and could be used as the source of experience for new projects. Culinary innovation platform Rogaland-Stavanger (Norway) is a combination of fine dining restaurants, "Fusion" restaurants, chefs, sommeliers, waiters; Government of Norway; innovation policy of Norway; regions; regional, national and global suppliers from related industries (horticulture, organic seafood and meat, non-organic food, ceramics, wine, beer and spirits, finance, culinary law and logistics, refrigeration and freezing, restaurant design); aquaculture research; Institute of Gastronomy; Stavanger University of Hotel and Tourism Management; research on Omega-3; "Arena for meat and drinks"; cooking courses in a high school; training and professional development. The Preseli platform (UK) [14] is a mecca for quality art, design, food and fabrics; galleries

and shops; gastronomy and training "from farm to fork", artistic talents and architects; production, marketing and apprenticeship of crafts; innovative system as the basis of creative industries. The Art and Food Platform of Tuscany (Italy) [15] is a combination of cultural, artistic and environmental heritage, creative local economic systems and a strong agri-food industry.

Thus, the development of regional development platforms is impossible without state support at the national and supranational level.

Current rural tourism market players single out co-competition as an efficient tool for their mutual interaction. This is the behaviour of stakeholders with common values and behavioural strategies in the rural tourism market, but competing views on socio-economic benefits. This means that market players simultaneously cooperate and compete in different activities, at different economic levels, for different reasons. An actual manifestation of co-competition is co-competition between destinations of the same region. Regional destinations compete for resources, consumers of tourist products, and market access. Cooperation is established in the field of marketing and infrastructure connections design. Thus, co-competition between destinations can be considered a special form of network cooperation, as such cooperative behaviour brings together numerous participants from different networks and locations. The idea has been successfully implemented by Bio Bed & Breakfast "Il Cielo" (Chianti Classico wine region). It offers accommodation for recreation and meals prepared from organic products. These are traditional recipes based on local, sometimes with dialectical names, varieties of plants and animals. The region specializes in growing organic products such as olive oil, wine, meat, cheese and vegetables. The products are widely available in Tuscany thanks to the close cooperative behaviour of their producers. Local businesses offer wine tours, food tours and team building activities, bike tours and walking tours around palaces and castles.

Cooperative behaviour of rural tourism market participants, which are connected by economic and social relations, is called network behaviour. Clusters are a special type of cooperative behaviour, because their members are connected to each other by a chain of value creation. A cluster is wider than horizontal networks. It is often cross-industry, for example a vertical network, consisting of heterogeneous and complementary firms specializing in a particular link or knowledge in the value chain. A regional cluster is a success having the following impact factors: life cycle phase of a cluster; state funding and policy; personnel qualification in a region; technological possibilities for regional R&D; quality of regional infrastructure; tax and regulatory environment; attractiveness of the region's lifestyle for people who can provide the cluster with world-class resources [16].

Conclusions. The further development of cooperative behaviour, the formation of associations, partnerships, platforms, networks and clusters is an indisputable basis for the development of rural tourism as an industry and economic entities as carriers of special knowledge and competences. The rural tourism market players should

recognize the priority of the quality of human capital, research, life-long learning, dedication to work, trust between partners, and co-operation.

Ukrainian rural tourism development should take into consideration the experience gained by the European entrepreneurs in the field of rural tourism as it could make smoother the process of local brands communications. The mutual benefits of Ukrainians and Europeans interested in the development and renovation of the Ukrainian rural tourism applying marketing and network instruments are evident too,

as it will induce emerging service quality, goods and services exchange between countries. The analyzed marketing and cooperative tools could be the background for starting new businesses in rural tourism and the roadmap design for local authorities interested in higher attractiveness of local rural tourism destinations. The accumulated European knowledge of geomarketing, IKT together with ancient cultural heritage makes it possible to promote diversified sphere of rural tourism aimed at local communities flourishing guided by the general national regulations.

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