

FACTORS OF ACHIEVING THE COMPETITIVENESS OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IN THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN

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ABSTRACT. Currently, the tourism industry is becoming one of the most important sectors of the economy, leading to an increase in the welfare of the population. Of particular importance in the development of the tourism industry are the factors that characterize tourist regions and territories. Therefore, the issues of their proper formation in order to achieve the competitiveness of the tourism industry, the brand and the image of the state in the world are the purpose of this article.

The scientific and practical significance of the article lies in the fact that recommendations have been developed to be applied for the sustainable development of the tourism industry in Uzbekistan. The value of the article is determined by the contribution to the development of the country's tourism industry, since the factors for achieving the country's competitiveness have for the first time been studied and presented.

KEYWORDS: tourism industry, tourist regions and territories, destination, tour operator, travel agency, digital space, sustainable tourism development

ЎЗБЕКСТАН РЕСПУБЛИКАСЫНДАҒЫ ТУРИСТІК ИНДУСТРИЯНЫҢ БӘСЕКЕГЕ ҚАБІЛЕТТІЛІГІН АРТТЫРУ ФАКТОРЛАРЫ

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АНДАТПА. Қазіргі таңда туризм саласы халықтың әл-ауқатының артуына алып келетін экономиканың маңызды салаларының біріне айналып отыр. Туризм индустриясын дамытуда туристік аймақтар мен аумақтарды сипаттайтын факторлар ерекше маңызға ие. Сондықтан туристік индустрияның бәсекеге қабілеттілігіне, мемлекеттің бренді мен имиджіне қол жеткізу үшін оларды дұрыс қалыптастыру мәселелері осы мақаланың мақсаты болып табылады. Мақаланың ғылыми-тәжірибелік маңыздылығы Өзбекстанның туристік индустриясын тұрақты дамыту үшін қолдануға болатын ұсыныстар әзірленгендігінде. Мақаланың құндылығы оның елдің туризм индустриясын дамытуға қосқан үлесімен анықталады, өйткені еліміздің бәсекеге қабілеттілігіне қол жеткізу факторлары алғаш рет зерттеліп, ұсынылды.

ТҮЙІН СӨЗДЕР: туризм индустриясы, туристік аймақтар мен аумақтар, дестинация, туроператор, туристік агенттік, цифрлық кеңістік, туризмнің тұрақты дамуы

ФАКТОРЫ ПОВЫШЕНИЯ КОНКУРЕНТОСПОСОБНОСТИ ТУРИСТИЧЕСКОЙ ОТРАСЛИ В РЕСПУБЛИКЕ УЗБЕКИСТАН

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АННОТАЦИЯ. В настоящее время туристическая отрасль становится одной из важнейших отраслей экономики, приводящей к росту благосостояния населения. Особое значение в развитии туристической отрасли имеют факторы, характеризующие туристические регионы и территории. Поэтому вопросы их правильного формирования для достижения конкурентоспособности туристической отрасли, бренда и имиджа государства в мире являются целью данной статьи. Научно-практическая значимость статьи заключается в том, что разработаны рекомендации, которые можно применять для устойчивого развития туристической отрасли Узбекистана. Ценность статьи определяется вкладом в развитие туристической отрасли страны, так как впервые изучены и представлены факторы достижения конкурентоспособности страны.

КЛЮЧЕВЫЕ СЛОВА: индустрия туризма, туристические регионы и территории, направление, туроператор, турагентство, цифровое пространство, устойчивое развитие туризма

INTRODUCTION. Currently, the tourism industry is becoming one of the most important sectors of the economy, leading to an increase in the welfare of the population. Factors characterizing tourist regions and territories are of particular importance in the development of the tourism industry.

In the context of the development of international relations, the study of the competitiveness of tourist regions is being updated due to the correct approaches in the formation of a country's brand, slogan and other attributes characterizing a tourist destination. Therefore, attention is being increased to the study of the marketing strategy of tourism; to the introduction of world-class classifications to standardize and improve the quality of tourist services. Based on the above, the purpose of the scientific article is to identify the factors shaping the competitiveness of the tourism industry in Uzbekistan.

MATERIALS AND METHODS OF RESEARCH.

The materials and methods used are reliable and influence the obtained results.

Within the framework of the article, the main methods of scientific research made it possible to analyze the works of scientists who are engaged in the promotion of the country in the global tourism industry, then in a clear logical sequence, studied the current state of the country's competitiveness in world tourism activities. The main part of the article reveals the basic concept of the work and contains an analysis and discussion of the conclusions and results obtained during the research. The article develops diagrams that are of practical importance. They are all commented on and analyzed, then the results are determined, which are formulated in the conclusion of the article. Therefore, it is necessary to describe its processes in detail.

RESULTS AND THEIR DISCUSSION.

Issues such as the competitiveness of tourist destinations, the theory of sustainable growth and competition in tourism, a systematic approach to tourism development, comparative and competitive advantages of tourist regions,

environmental protection, prices, the role of the local population in the development of tourism have been widely studied by foreign scientists. Among them are: V. Della Corte [1], U.Martini [2], M.Franc [3], G.Crouch [4], M.Porter [5], S.Hassan [6], L.Dweyer [7], Ch.Kim [7].

Among the CIS scientists, such scientists as N.S.Morozova [8], V.S.Senin [9], V.S.Bogolyubov [10], V.P.Orlovskaya [10] can be distinguished. Their [9] research works are devoted to the theory and methodology of competitive development in tourism, development of international tourism, management of the tourism industry and hotel management.

Among Uzbekistan scientists, the following scientists can be distinguished: M.E.Pulatov [11], M.K.Pardayev [12], I.S.Tukhliyev [13], B.N.Navruz-Zoda [14], whose research papers are devoted to issues of socio-economic development of tourist regions.

In contrast to works carried out in this area, the article explores scientific factors of increasing the competitiveness of tourism industry of Uzbekistan.

Over the past 20 years, there have also been developed various methods in science to determine the competitiveness of tourist regions. These include four principles of competitiveness of tourism regions, namely: favorable conditions for the industry development, tourism is a leading industry, the presence of strong sales channels in various markets and a fast-growing private sector.

All scientific research on the international competitiveness of tourist regions is based on the paradigm of comparative and competitive advantages. Fundamentally different approaches are put forward in economic theory and management sources to develop a theoretical concept of the problem of international competitiveness.

The issue of increasing the competitiveness of Uzbekistan as a tourist region has been the subject of various studies, where such approaches as strategic planning and management, marketing of tourist regions, market positioning, image and branding, price

competitiveness, environmental protection, and the concept of sustainable development have been used. It should be noted that in Uzbekistan, tourism needs, depending on the purpose of the trip, arise on a 7M scale and reflect seven aspects of competitiveness. That is, the competitiveness of the country's tourism sector depends on the quality of the services offered by an individual entrepreneur (guide, craftsman, waiter, taxi driver) on a mono-scale, a national guest house with the status of a family enterprise on a mini-scale, catering enterprises, hotels and tour operators on a micro-scale, the activities of regional offices of

the State Committee for Tourism Development on meta and meso scales, "Uzbekistan Temir Yullari" JSC on a macro scale and "Uzbekistan Airways" national airline on a mega scale. The country's tourism competitiveness (macro) is due to the gradual improvement of each link in the tourism sector from the bottom up on a 7M scale.

We believe that the sustainable development of tourism is tourism, which ensures that current and future economic, social and environmental impacts are taken into account while meeting the needs of tourists, the tourism industry, and the environment. In our opinion, the sustainable

Table 1 - Production and consumption models based on the three principles of sustainable tourism development (environmental factor)

Implementation on a 7M scale	Implementation in a combination of supply and demand	
	Production model	Consumption model
Mono	Implementation of the ecogid service	Use of walking tours and environmentally friendly vehicles
Mini	Introduction of the national eco-house category	Use of environmentally friendly energy and accommodation in environmentally friendly accommodation facilities
Micro	Introduction of the eco-restaurant category	Consumption of food cooked from only local products
Meta	Introduction of the category of ecotourists	Selection of tourist routes that do not harm the environment
Meso	Introduction of mechanisms for the formation of eco-tourism regions	To choose to travel to cities that recognize the preservation of ecology as the main factor of development
Macro	Introduction of mechanisms for the formation of an ecotouristic country	To choose to travel to countries that recognize the preservation of ecology as the main factor of development
Mega	Support for mega eco-projects covering several countries	Choice of tourist destinations running through several countries where environmental conservation is recognized as a key factor in development (the Great Silk Road)
Implementation based on programs corresponding to the three spaces		
A space that generates travelers	Cooperation with initiative tour operators with an environmental bias	Development of programs that stimulate ecotourists
Information space	Development of a calendar of eco-festival events, information space on ecotourism products and services	Promotion of the use of digital media to disseminate information about eco-transport, eco-hotel, eco-restaurant, ecotourist regions
A space where a travel is taking place	Supports the offer system of eco-friendly tour operators and local travel agents	Formation of a regulatory framework governing the services of tour operators and travel agents and consumer protection.
<i>Note: compiled by the authors</i>		

development of tourism in Uzbekistan can be based on the following principles:

- implementation of sustainable tourism development in combination of supply and demand;
- implementation of tourism development on a 7M scale (mono, mini, micro, meta, meso, macro and mega);
- implementation of a tourist offer system based on programs suitable for tourism-generating, tourism and information spaces.

Using Table 1, we systematically expressed the possibilities of introducing production and consumption models based on the three principles of sustainable tourism development.

Sustainable tourism development should take into account the economic, social and environmental aspects of all services and goods consumed by visitors during travel, which is the first principle. The second principle provides for development on a 7M scale. The last principle of sustainable tourism development provides for the implementation of measures to promote a business model based on the concept of sustainable development in spaces where travel is carried out in cooperation with business entities that generate travelers and the implementation of measures to develop consumer culture, as well as the gradual formation of the image of Uzbekistan as a sustainably developing tourist region.

Economic, political, informational globalization and integration have led to changes in the tourist space. The global tourism industry is becoming increasingly integrated, and the interconnectedness of the countries that make it up is gradually increasing. The main condition for assessing the real competitiveness of tourism and travel of a certain country and the constant increase in its attractiveness requires a systematic analysis of the tourist offer system and from the point of view of the situation in the countries generating travelers and the information space that covers this system.

Based on a systematic geographical approach to tourism, a model consisting of a region generating travelers, a tourist region

(destination), and a transit zone is widely distributed, which combines the previous two components and is an approach to tourism as a system consisting of tourists, the tourism industry and geographical elements. In addition, more advanced models of the tourism system have been developed, considered as a system consisting of the environment of the tourist region, the market generating travelers, a complex of promotional events, as well as transport and communications. Therefore, tourism can be defined as an open system that consists of elements that move and work together in a specific environment that is influenced by political, economic, social, technological and environmental factors.

In general, all domestic and foreign researchers studying tourism as a system recognize the fact that it consists of the following 6 factors: 1) the traveler, 2) the region generating travelers, 3) the travel zone, 4) the transit zone, 5) the tourism industry, 6) the social, economic, political, technological, regulatory, environmental environment where the system operates.

Systematic approaches to tourism focus on studying a specific aspect of the problem. To understand and delve into the spatial scale of tourism, it should be considered as a geographical, social and industrial system.

In our opinion, the category of "space" plays a crucial role in the study of tourism as a system. Recognizing the diversity of tourist spaces, the following main features are highlighted: heterogeneity and complexity, openness to other spaces, integrity of constituent elements, seasonality of actions, hierarchy of territorial location, variability of processes.

In our opinion, the system of tourist supply consists of incoming and outgoing units and is open, therefore it is influenced by social, economic, political, technological, regulatory and environmental factors.

Its introductory part contains material, human, financial and information resources that are common to all systems. If the introductory part of the system of tourist offers is a set

of all material and non-material resources involved in meeting the travel needs and financial resources of a potential tourist, then the output part is a set of tourist impressions, that is, a set of positive emotions from goods and services consumed during the trip, and plays a crucial role in shaping the image of the destination, where the trip took place. The main function of the tourist offer system is to attract potential tourists, meet their tourist needs and deliver them to a permanent place of residence with positive emotions. To understand these processes from a scientific point of view, it is necessary to study the tourist offer system comprehensively, systematically and from the point of view of different geographical zones.

The main condition for the sustainable development of tourism in the country are the spaces that generate travelers and where travel is carried out, as well as the need to rethink the issue of scientific justification of ways to improve understanding of the processes taking place in the information space integrating the present. The study theoretically examines tourism within the country, based on a three-dimensional systematic approach. In our opinion, the system of tourist supply within the country is an open system consisting of spaces that generate travelers, information and travel, represents the totality of all governmental and non-governmental organizations involved in the process of meeting the travel needs of international inbound and domestic visitors in all three spaces.

According to the results of the research, it was concluded that tourism within the country is based on the processes that occur between consumers and producers in these three spaces.

1. The space generating travelers includes the following goods and services that are consumed before traveling:

Intermediaries in tourism (initiative tour operators, travel agencies, representative offices of tourist regions in foreign markets that generate travelers);

Manufacturers of goods and services consumed before traveling (transport

companies, consular services, publishers of travel-related materials, cameras, suitcases and other goods or services consumed during travel).

2. Information space includes the following sources of information and marketing tools that form the tourist flow and reflect the image and attractiveness of the country:

- tools formed on the basis of information technologies to meet the needs of organized and self-organized visitors (geoinformation systems, information technologies that enable the purchase or booking of services, channels for the commercialization of travel packages of initiative and receptive tour operators, travel agencies, transport booking systems, hotels, restaurants, guides and other services;

- a set of all measures related to strategic marketing, promotion of the attractiveness of the country and the formation of a positive image (branding, image creation, advertising, information transmitted through the media);

- a set of sources informing about the current legislation of the state (mass media, providing access to regulatory documents in foreign languages (Lex.uz)).

3. Travel space is a set of goods and services provided by all organizations involved in the process of meeting travel needs. In particular:

- governmental and non-governmental organizations involved in the development, regulation and cooperation in the field of tourism;

- intermediaries in tourism (receptive tour operators);

- manufacturers of goods and services consumed during the trip (transport companies, accommodation facilities, catering establishments, suppliers of museum and tourist services, other goods or services used during the trip).

The sustainable development of tourism within the country, in our opinion, is due, firstly, to established relations of cooperation with markets that create organized tourists, that is, from mutually beneficial economic relations of receptive and initiative tour operators, and

secondly, to the presence of very important means in the eyes of independently organized travelers, namely booking systems, the inclusion of service organizations in databases of geographic information systems and the introduction of other marketing tools based on information technology.

In our opinion, as a result of the increasing penetration of digital technologies into tourism, there have been drastic changes in the processes of forming the tourist flow. As a result of empirical observations and research based on scientific sources, the authors propose 5 models of the process of forming the tourist flow in the tourist market of Uzbekistan from the point of view of demand:

1. The model of an initiative tour operator. The tourist trip is organized in full cooperation with an initiative tour operator working at the permanent place of residence of a potential tourist, and a receptive tour operator located in the tourist region where the tourist trip is organized, and is sold as a tourist package, including hotel services, transport, guide, restaurant, etc. If at a time when Internet technologies were insufficiently developed, and initiative tour operators did not have their own websites, customers turned to travel agencies to buy a travel package, today this process is carried out without intermediaries. That is, the client has the opportunity to purchase a travel package using the digital sales channels of an initiative tour operator;

2. The model of a receptive tour operator. A tourist trip is remotely organized, in whole or in part, by a receptive tour operator working in the host country, and provides for the sale of at least three services (visa support, hotel, transport, etc.), at a single price in the form of a tourist package. This model has become popular in the XXI century, when most potential tourists could purchase a travel package through sales channels (websites) created directly by a receptive tour operator (in the tourist region to which a tourist trip is organized), without having to contact a tour operator or a travel agency operating in the tourist's permanent place of

residence.

3. The model of booking systems. In the second half of the XX century, a limited group of people (tour operators, travel agencies, airline and railway ticket office employees) had access to global reservation systems to purchase tickets for various vehicles and hotel reservations, as well as the formation of personal electronic systems of travel service providers; they are currently gaining popularity in the form of websites and mobile applications with a compact interface that can be used by everyone, and this expands the scope of the tourist flow formation process. Modern tourists independently organize their trips to our country using global booking systems for air and railway tickets, motor transport, hotels, restaurants and guide services (booking.com, trivago.com, needguide.ru) or local systems, that is, the own websites of travel service organizations (eticket.uzrailway.uz, uzbooking.com).

4. The model of the tourist portal. This model provides for the formation of tourist flows through tourist portals created by marketing authorities at the national, regional and local levels, based on the concept of managing a tourist region as a destination. This model differs from others by the use of innovative methods based on the principles of the digital economy in the management of the tourism industry at different levels, the use of internal resources to attract tourists, the localization of the bulk of income from the industry, and the participation of local players in the tourism market. This model provides an opportunity for countries with highly developed and developing tourism to use their tourism potential to create tourist portals at the national, regional or local levels and through them provide potential tourists with the opportunity to independently organize trips.

5. The model of a local travel agent. The category of tourists who prefer to stay in certain tourist places for a long time (guests visiting relatives, families in private mobile homes, people who decided to stay in the historical city for more than 3 days) choose the

path of self-organization of the trip and, as a rule, tend to purchase mini-packages with a duration of 3 to 10 hours through travel agents working in the visited tourist destination. This type of service is widely used in Egypt, Thailand, Singapore, Turkey, the USA and other developed countries. Such companies are called "Destination Management Companies". Within the framework of this business model, short-term travel packages are implemented at the request of customers, which are usually not offered by macro-level tour operators.

It should be noted that the above-mentioned 5 models that form the tourist flow are active in practice, and the first and second models correspond to the organized segment of the tourist flow in terms of supply, the third and fourth models meet the needs of an independently organized tourist segment. The fifth model is designed to meet the needs of mini-packages, both for the self-organizing tourist segment and the segment that purchases a tourist package through intermediaries. In addition, there is a tendency for the first two models to give way to 3-4-5 models, which in turn indicates that Uzbekistan needs to take measures to adapt the tourist offer system to innovative segments, that is, to create an infrastructure suitable for independent travelers organizing their trips through booking systems and travel portals.

The advent of digital media has had a significant impact on tourism. This situation can be characterized by the growing number of travelers planning their trips based on online travel agencies, digitally user-generated content, and other digital tools. For example, in 2014, 59% of international trips made by EU residents used digital means to book accommodation and 67% to purchase air tickets [15]. The number of tourists in the UK booking accommodation online increased from 42% in 2007 to 52% in 2022. The sharp reduction in the number of physically active tour operators is proof of this. Thus, the number of travel agencies in the US decreased from 25,975 organizations in 2000 to 14,797 in 2016, and employment decreased from 183,143 to 108,984 [16] employees.

For example, booking.com operates in 190 countries and has 29 million accommodation facilities located in 154,000 tourist destinations worldwide.

Moreover, in a survey conducted by the State Committee for Tourism Development, only 12.8% of respondents (out of a total of 5,756) stated that they traveled to Uzbekistan on a tourist package. The majority of travelers using the services of tour operators are from European countries (38.6%) and the Asia-Pacific region (38.3%). The smallest number of tourists traveling on tourist routes in Uzbekistan, i.e. 3.2% are citizens of the CIS and 3.7% of Central Asia [16].

As a result of the increase in the level of international openness of Uzbekistan, the number of large tourist segments that are still not receiving due attention, that is, those who independently organize their trips, will inevitably increase dramatically.

In order to increase the attractiveness of Uzbekistan in the eyes of unorganized tourists, the following tasks are of paramount importance:

1. It is necessary to introduce and improve existing facilities and national systems that will provide wide access to booking systems and the purchase of basic services such as hotel services, restaurants, purchase and booking of air and rail transport tickets, entrance tickets to attractions online.

2. Since self-organizing tourists, as a rule, use innovative guide services together with traditional ones and prefer to receive these services through an audio guide, museum information kiosks, and mobile applications, it is necessary to widely put into practice;

3. Unlike organized tourists, self-organized tourists eat impromptu, depending on the case, therefore, it is recommended to introduce the same type of fast food outlets (fast food), given that they prefer to use the services of nearby cafes and bars in places of tourist interest;

4. Taking into account the increasing number of trips carried out by private, rented vehicles, it is necessary to introduce parking lots with large

capacity and campsites in tourist areas;

5. As a result of a sharp increase in the number of tourists wishing to use affordable housing services, in the near future there will be a high demand for traditional houses, hostels, apartment rentals, which will require an increase in the number of such services;

6. Access to tourist information is crucial in the process of independent travel, and the need for widespread use of information kiosks, signage, geolocation systems and tourist police services will grow.

Based on the above conclusions and expert opinions obtained as a result of studying market trends of initiative tour operators operating in the main markets generating tourists (USA, Germany, Switzerland, France, Italy, Great Britain), a forecast of types of tourist services has been developed, the need for which will increase and decrease by 2030 in Uzbekistan.

The implementation of targeted measures in the above cases will increase the attractiveness of the country for self-organized tourists from 52 countries using the simplified visa regime and 86 countries without visa entry into the country, as well as achieve high competitiveness of travel and tourism in Uzbekistan.

The development of information and communication technologies has led to dramatic changes in the value chain through processes such as marketing, digital sales channels and consumption of travel services. Tourism regions where national booking systems have not yet been implemented have become dependent on external intermediaries to promote and sell their services, causing a disproportionate distribution of the added value created by tourism. That is, there is such a thing as "incompatibility in the digital economy" between the spaces generating tourists and the place of travel. The bigger the gap, the more difficult it is to conquer foreign markets. An important condition for the sustainable development of tourism at the national level in the modern digital era is that the tourism supply system requires the introduction of mechanisms to avoid "incompatibility in the

digital economy" in the information space.

According to Internet World Stats, in January 2020 there were 4 billion Internet users worldwide, of which 2 billion 304 million were from Asia. According to the source, the number of Internet users in Uzbekistan in 2000 was 7.5 thousand people, whereas in January 2020 the number of users amounted to 17.161 million people, which is half of the total population. Sustainable competitiveness can be achieved by increasing the number of legal entities and individuals using the Internet to 85-90% of the total population.

Another factor in the competitiveness of the tourist region is the availability of regional information in the digital spaces of the macro level. At the macro level, tourist regions can carry out marketing activities using three types of digital means such as:

1. Formal macro-information spaces. Formal information spaces where the process of marketing activities related to the tourist region is fully controlled. Examples of such information spaces are the official websites of tourist regions, regional or national tourist portals. These resources are fully controlled by the governing bodies of the tourism sector, such as the State Committee for Tourism Development, information and data on websites are constantly entered and updated by officials of this body and have the forms B2B (entrepreneur-entrepreneur) and B2C (entrepreneur-consumer);

2. Partially formal macroinformation spaces. Partial formal digital media includes all blogs, profiles and pages on social networks (FaceBook, Twitter, LinkedIn). Social networks are divided into "general purpose" ones with a large audience and "specialized" ones with a specific purpose, such as WikiTravel, GoogleTravel;

3. Informal macro-information spaces. This information space performs the most important and complex function. In fact, the image of the tourist zone is formed in this information space and plays a crucial role in establishing effective marketing activities. Informal information spaces include blogs,

online communities, social networks, as well as all websites (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr) that allow you to generate information, recommendations, suggestions, videos, photos and similar content.

In general, this factor of competitiveness of the tourist region shows the level of development of the information space, and, in our opinion, the country's tourism competitiveness can be assessed on the basis of the "Macro-information digital platform of the tourist space".

To form a digital platform for the tourist information space of Uzbekistan, the official tourist sites of the republic were analyzed (uzbekistan.travel, uzbektourism.uz). As a result, a digital platform of the tourist macro information space of the Republic of Uzbekistan was developed and is presented in the form of three wheels moving each other.

Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Telegram and Instagram social media networks are depicted as an informal information space, which are the driving force behind formal and partially formal information spaces.

Formal information spaces of Uzbekistan are available on its official websites (uzbekistan.travel, uzbektourism.uz). Partial formal information space (facebook.com/uzbekistan.tourism, youtube.com/visituzbekistan, t.me/Uzbekistan_travel, instagram.com/uzb_travel, twitter.com/uzb_travel) are available on official digital media, social media pages, business profiles and channels, one can follow them via links from official websites.

In our opinion, in order to achieve competitiveness in the tourism information space at the macro level, it is necessary to pay attention to the following:

- for the purpose of increasing the capabilities and audience of the tourism portal of Uzbekistan, it is advisable to develop its versions in Spanish, Italian, Japanese and Chinese;

- along with the growth of activity in social networks, it is recommended to accelerate the process of inter-social network integration;

- continuously implement measures (contests, page updates, consumer generated

content) aimed at steadily increasing the number of subscribers, readers and views.

Tourist regions, as well as goods and services, should have their own commercial mark, that is, a brand, which is very important to find their place in the tourist market in an era of increasing globalization, when there appear more and more tourist destinations offering very similar types of travel. The development of our own tourism brand, which will allow regions to differ from others, depends on how effectively we promote this tourism brand in the tourism market. All this is a determining factor in achieving sustainable competitiveness in the tourism industry.

As we deem it, in practice, the brand of a tourist region consists of the following elements in its content:

- logo (L) – distinguishing a tourist destination from other places: a certain distinctive sign, architectural monument, landscape or image of a rare animal, colors of the flag, contours of the state map, national, religious or historical symbol, etc.;

- name of the tourist destination (NTD) (in the form of a hybrid, converted into a logo, in the form of an address of the portal of the tourist zone);

- the promise given by a tourist destination to a potential visitor (C) (in the scientific literature, a slogan, a motto are used under such concepts).

It should be noted that brands of tourist destinations are not formed on the basis of a single standard. After studying the symbols of more than 200 tourist destinations, we came to the conclusion that a full-fledged "Brand of a Tourist Destination" (BTC) can be modeled using the following formula:

$$BTC = L + NTD + C$$

However, not all brands of a tourist destination used in practice at different geographical levels are formed in accordance with the recommended formula. As a result of studying more than 200 brands of tourist destinations, we consider it appropriate to classify them into different groups as follows:

Depending on the scale of the territories: there are tourist brands of the village, district, city, region, country and geographical regions.

According to the brand composition: logo + name of the tourist destination + slogan (motto); logo + web address of the portal of the tourist destination + slogan (motto); name of the tourist destination converted into logo + slogan (motto); name of the tourist destination converted into logo + web address of the portal of the tourist destination;

According to the shape of the logo: a logo depicting the tourist symbol of the country (architectural monument, natural landscape, animal), a logo based on the colors of the national flag, and a logo with the name of the country.

If the internal image is influenced by all marketing activities organized by a tourist destination, then the external image is the result of advertising work. In our opinion, the three-dimensional paradigm proposed as a result of the dissertation research can be used in the development of a conceptual model for the formation of a brand of a tourist destination. The internal and external brand image of a tourist destination, as well as their combined marketing activities, that is, positioning (the process of consolidation in the market and in the consumer's mind), is a model consisting of three spaces. If the image of the purpose of the trip is formed in the market that generates travelers, then the brand is formed in the place where the trip is taking place. The process of combining image and brand, that is, positioning in the minds of consumers, is achieved with the help of a slogan. Therefore, a slogan is a category that plays a decisive role in promoting the region.

As a result of the comparative analysis conducted in the framework of this article, the competitiveness of national tourist brands of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan was determined using such methods as the classification of tourist destinations by brand composition proposed by the authors, a 7-level method for assessing

the quality of travel brand slogans developed by S.Pike, as well as regional brand rankings and Regional strategy brands (HBS) published by Bloom Consulting [17]. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 3.

The result of the analysis confirms that the studied national tourist brands do not correspond in composition to the category logo + name of a tourist destination + slogan (motto). For example, in Kazakhstan, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Infrastructure Development, Information, the Ministry of Public Development, etc. were engaged in brand development, even world-class specialists and consulting companies were involved in this work, but work in this direction is still underway, since the country brand is a very complex and multidimensional indicator characterizing a particular country.

In accordance with the 7-level methodology for determining the quality of the slogan, the tourist slogans of Armenia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan corresponded to the BBB level, and it was concluded that the phrase chosen as the slogan is an offer characteristic of many other regions. It turned out that the phrases in the slogans of Azerbaijani and Kyrgyz brands correspond to the AAA level and are an offer that is suitable for any tourist destination.

According to the ranking of regional brands published by the international organization Bloom Consulting in 2021, Armenia ranks 35th out of 44 Asian countries and 121st out of 180 countries. Azerbaijan is positioned 30th and 101st, Kyrgyzstan – 40th and 147th, Kazakhstan – 26th and 85th, and Tajikistan – 44th and 177th respectively. According to the brand strategy of the region, Armenia is rated as "very good", Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan are "good" and Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan are "partially good".

A comparative analysis of the classification of national tourist brands of 5 neighboring countries by brand composition, methods for determining the quality of the offer by the phrase used in the slogan, the regional brand strategy and the results of the national brand rating were carried out. For a stable increase

Table 3 - Comparative analysis of national travel brands of the CIS countries

Country	Methodology of brand classification by composition (N.S. Ibragimov)	7-level methodology for determining the quality of a slogan (S. Pike)	Bloom Consulting regional brand rating		
			Asian Ranking (44)	World Ranking (180)	HBS Rating
Armenia	logo + name of the tourist destination + slogan (motto)	Level 3B is an offer typical for many other regions;	35	121	BBB
Azerbaijan	logo + name of the tourist destination + slogan (motto)	Level 3A is an offer that is suitable for any tourist destination;	30	101	BB
Kyrgyzstan	logo + name of the tourist destination + slogan (motto)	Level 3A is an offer that is suitable for any tourist destination;	40	147	B
Kazakhstan	logo + name of the tourist destination + slogan (motto)	Level 0 - There is no clear offer in the slogan		85	BB
Tajikistan	logo + name of the tourist destination + slogan (motto)	Level 3B is an offer typical for many other regions.	44	177	B
Uzbekistan	logo + name of the tourist destination + slogan (motto)	Level 3B is an offer typical for many other regions.	-	-	-

Note: compiled by the authors

in the competitiveness of the national brand of Uzbekistan, the following conclusions and suggestions were made:

1. The slogan, which is promoted in different languages through the website of the State Committee for Tourism Development (uzbektourism.uz) Symbol of the magic East (Symbol of the Magic East) in accordance with the methodology of S. Pike – a phrase of average quality, without embodying a clear offer, has the character of a definition given in relation to Uzbekistan, it lacks creative promises;

2. The word "East" in the national brand designates a very wide geographical area, which misleads potential tourists. That is, the word "East" used in the slogan of the national brand does not allow a potential tourist to imagine Uzbekistan's place on the world map. In our opinion, using the phrase "Silk crossroads" in the slogan of our country, we can indicate that Uzbekistan is a geographical area where the main intersections of the Great Silk Road are

located;

3. In fact, a slogan is not just a combination of words expressing the geographical location, characteristics and competitive advantages of a country, but a guarantee of the country to potential tourists, investors and others in order to implement a strategy of positioning themselves in the market and in the understanding of consumers. That is, it is recommended to use motivating phrases by adding the word "inspiration" to the above-mentioned phrase "crossroads of the Silk Road". Thus, the new slogan of the national tourism brand of the renewed Uzbekistan will sound like "inspiring crossroads of the Silk Road", "ilhomlantiruvchi Ipak yo'li chorrahasi" in Uzbek and "Вдохновляющий перекресток Шёлкового пути" in Russian;

4. Promoting Uzbekistan in the world as a country at the crossroads of the Great Silk Road ravel that will lead to a creative breakthrough among creative people, new ideas from

scientists, inventions from innovators, new works from people of art, awakening interest in life among depressed people indicating that this is a hotbed of enlightenment. It is recommended to carry out such motivational activities in the form of a comprehensive work based on the strategic brand tags of the same name (#).

CONCLUSION. As a result of the research conducted to form factors in order to achieve sustainable competitiveness of the tourist region, the following conclusions and recommendations were made:

1. Based on the definition of the existence of a hierarchical typology of tourist destinations and as a result of their division into 1) mono (tourist service/product created by an individual entrepreneur), 2) mini (tourist service / product created by a family business), 3) micro (tourist service, product created by a limited liability company), 4) meta (citywide tourist space), 5) meso (a space with tourist potential), 6) macro (travel within the country) and 7) mega (travel through several countries) scales, "7M concept" of the competitiveness of the tourist region was scientifically substantiated.

2. Sustainable tourism development – introduction of mechanisms for the formation of appropriate production models and consumer culture, to maintain economically sustainable growth of tourist destinations, maintain social and environmental balance. In this regard, the authors considers it advisable to implement the concept of sustainable tourism development in Uzbekistan based on 1) a combination of supply and demand; 2) on a 7M (mono, mini, micro, meta, meso, macro and mega) scale and 3) implementation of a tourist offer system based on programs implemented in such spaces as generating tourists.

3. The implementation of reforms based on the principles laid down in the concept of sustainable development is achieved through the introduction and support of a cluster management system based on the sustainable development of the country's tourism on a 7M scale from the bottom up, the gradual

improvement of each link in the tourism industry, self-government and corporate competition.

4. The system of tourist offers within the country is an open system consisting of a tourist-generating, tourist destination, where the trip will take place, and information spaces, as well as a combination of all governmental and non-governmental organizations involved in the process of meeting the tourist needs of international and local visitors in all three spaces.

5. The sustainable development of tourism in the country depends: firstly, on cooperation with organized markets, that is, mutually beneficial economic relations between a receptive and proactive tour operator, and secondly, from the point of view of self-organized tourists, the availability of booking systems, the inclusion of service organizations in databases of geographic information systems and the introduction of other marketing tools based on digital technology. That is, there is a concept of a "incompatibility in the digital economy" between the tourist-generating space and the travel space; the larger it is, the more difficult it is to occupy the markets that generate tourists and this will lead to an uneven distribution of the value chain.

6. The macro information space of the country consists of 1) formal macro information spaces, 2) partially formal macro information spaces and 3) informal macro information spaces. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Telegram, and Instagram social media include the informal information space, and it is this space that is the main driving force behind the remaining formal and partially formal information spaces.

7. Models that form the flow of tourists to Uzbekistan, such as 1) a receptive tour operator, 2) an initiative tour operator, 3) digital booking and purchase systems, 4) national and local travel portals and 5) local travel agents; in practice the first and second models are very active in terms of supply, meeting the needs the organized segment of the tourist flow, the third and fourth models meet the needs of the

independently organized tourist segment. The 5-model is adapted both to meet the needs of tourists who purchase packages with the help of intermediaries and to meet the needs of the self-organizing tourist segment in mini-packages. In addition, there is a tendency for the first two models to give way to 3-4-5 models, which in turn indicates that Uzbekistan needs to take measures to adapt the tourist offer system to innovative segments, that is, to create an infrastructure suitable for independent travelers who organize their trips through booking systems and travel portals.

8. The process of creating a brand of a tourist destination consists of three parts, which are formed as a result of marketing

activities (positioning) that occur in the market and in the minds of consumers, combining the external image (demand) and the internal image (supply). A methodology has been developed for classifying tourist zone brands by regional scale, brand composition and logo shape, as well as the brand formula of the tourist zone.

9. As a result of a comparative analysis of neighboring countries, it is possible to promote Uzbekistan in the world as a country at the crossroads of the Great Silk Road.

The above scientific proposals and practical recommendations will serve to achieve sustainable competitiveness of the region through the development of tourism

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