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## **MODERN CONCEPTS OF ORGANIZING FLEXIBLE TOURISM AND RESTAURANT BUSINESS**

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## **СУЧАСНІ КОНЦЕПЦІЇ ОРГАНІЗАЦІЇ ГНУЧКОГО ТУРИСТИЧНОГО ТА РЕСТОРАННОГО БІЗНЕСУ**

*У статті реалізовано ідентифікацію та представлення системних характеристик сучасних концепцій гнучкої організації туристичного та ресторанного бізнесу. Дослідження підтвердило, що гнучкість є ключовим фактором успіху в туристичному та ресторанному бізнесі. Проведене дослідження дозволило констатувати, що гнучкість у туристичному та ресторанному бізнесі є багатограним поняттям, яке охоплює такі аспекти, як: фокус на потреби клієнта; гнучкість у пропозиціях; технологічна оснащеність; колаборація; інноваційність. Результати дослідження свідчать про те, що гнучкість є ключовим фактором успіху в сучасному бізнесі. Вона дозволяє не тільки підвищити ефективність роботи, але й створити конкурентну перевагу на ринку через індивідуальний підхід, персоналізацію послуг та продуктів, налагодження довгострокових відносин з клієнтами, здатність швидко реагувати на зміни, які зумовлені динамічністю ринку, сезонністю, непередбачуваними ситуаціями, використанням сучасних технологій (для оптимізації процесів, аналізу даних та взаємодії з клієнтами), розширенням співпраці з іншими компаніями, постачальниками та партнерами, постійним пошуком нових ідей, впровадженням інноваційних рішень тощо. Переваги гнучкості зумовлені загальним змістом концепцій організації туристичного та ресторанного бізнесу, які ідентифіковано як сукупність підходів, методів та інструментів, які дозволяють підприємницькій, комерційній чи будь-якій іншій діяльності цих галузей швидко підлаштовуватися під зміни зовнішнього середовища, потреби клієнтів та наявні ресурси. Концепції гнучкості в туристичному та ресторанному бізнесі у загальному схожі, однак їх конкретні прояви різняться. Це пов'язано зі специфікою кожної галузі, особливостями їхніх продуктів та характерам взаємодії з клієнтами. Результати дослідження відкривають широкі перспективи для подальших наукових розробок, серед яких розробка методології кількісної оцінки рівня гнучкості підприємств у туристичному та ресторанному бізнесі та дослідження взаємодії між різними принциповими компонентами гнучкості.*

*The article implements the identification and presentation of the systemic characteristics of flexible organization concepts in the tourism and restaurant industries. The research confirmed that flexibility is a core factor for success in these sectors. The study established that flexibility in the tourism and restaurant industries is a multifaceted concept encompassing aspects such as customer orientation, adaptability in offerings, technological capability, collaboration, and innovation. The study results indicate that flexibility is a core factor for success in modern business. It not only enhances operational efficiency but also creates a competitive advantage in the market through benefits such as personalized approaches, customized services, and products, the establishment of long-term client relationships, and the ability to quickly respond to market changes, seasonality, trends, and unforeseen situations. Additionally, it involves leveraging modern technologies for process optimization, data analysis, and customer interaction, collaborating with other companies, suppliers, and partners to expand opportunities and create new products, continuously seeking new ideas, implementing innovative solutions, and adapting to new technologies. The advantages of flexibility are determined by the overall content of the concepts of flexible organization in the tourism and restaurant industries, which we have identified as a combination of approaches, methods, and tools that enable entrepreneurial, commercial, or any other activities in these sectors to quickly adapt to changes in the external environment, customer needs, and available resources. The concepts of flexibility in the tourism and restaurant industries share some similarities, but their specific manifestations differ. This is due to the unique characteristics of each sector, including the nature of their products and interactions with customers. The research opens up broad prospects for further scientific development, including the creation of a methodology for quantitatively assessing the level of flexibility in enterprises within the tourism and restaurant industries, as well as exploring the interactions between various components of flexibility.*

**Ключові слова:** туризм; зміни; середовище функціонування; використання свіжих сезонних продуктів; створення унікальних страв; концепція персоналізації.

**Keywords:** *tourism; changes; operating environment; fresh seasonal ingredients use; creation of unique dishes; concept of personalization.*

**Problem statement.** The contemporary world of tourism and the restaurant business is characterized by high dynamism, changing consumer preferences, and intensified competition. The dynamic nature of this phenomenon is influenced by a combination of various factors.

Firstly, the continuous development of technology (such as mobile applications, online booking, and social media) is fundamentally changing people's plans and undertaking trips, besides how they choose dining establishments.

Secondly, political crises, wars, natural disasters, and climate change lead to abrupt shifts in tourist flows and consumer preferences.

Thirdly, economic crises, inflation, and fluctuations in exchange rates affect consumers' purchasing power and tourism decisions.

So, to deal with all these changes, businesses in the tourism and restaurant industries are becoming more flexible.

**The analysis of recent researches and publications.** Both domestic and foreign researchers have extensively explored various aspects of the overall organization of the tourism and restaurant business in their scientific works. In particular, researchers such as T.M. Kachala, I.O. Petrovska, H. Mashika, V. Zelic, A. Kiziun, R. Maslyhan, and others have conducted studies on defining goals, developing strategies, creating customer value propositions, and designing tours and menus.

Olabodi O. V. and Fesun T. P. examined the features of implementing new technologies besides creating new products and services. Pyatnytska N. O. outlined some issues related to tourism and restaurant business adaptation to market changes, such as procurement organization, inventory management, transportation services, and the infrastructure needed to serve customers.

The issues of flexibility and contemporary organizational models of flexible tourism and restaurant businesses remain under-explored in academic literature, thus necessitating further investigation.

***Goal setting (formulation of goals of the article).*** In line with the stated provisions, this paper aims to identify and systematically analyze contemporary models of flexible organization within the tourism and restaurant business.

***The paper main body with full reasoning of academic results.*** The environment in which the tourism and restaurant business operates is characterized by stochasticity (which is shaped and sustained by high dynamism, changing consumer preferences, and intensified competition). This is because traditional management models (especially those based on rigid hierarchy, centralized decision-making, and long-term planning) often prove suboptimal in such conditions [4]. Moreover, empirical evidence from existing business organizations substantiates the claim that flexible organizational models outperform traditional ones in stochastic environments [4; 6].

Within flexible tourism and restaurant business, entities are proactive in shaping market trends and consumer preferences rather than merely responding to them. This is confirmed by the experience of companies such as McDonald's, Starbucks, and Booking.com, which demonstrate that these business entities instantly adapt to changes as they actively initiate and direct them (using proactive search and focusing on new opportunities).

The Starbucks chain, for instance, has leveraged these processes to cultivate coffee shops as a "third place" where individuals can engage in work, socialization, and leisure activities. Moreover, the establishment allows customers to choose from various types of coffee, portion sizes, and add-ins, thus creating a personalized beverage. The establishment constantly updates its menu, offering seasonal drinks and dishes that cater to customers' tastes throughout the year. Coffee shop design is constantly adapting to meet the needs of diverse audiences, from students to business professionals. Flexibility has allowed Starbucks to transcend the traditional coffee shop model.

Through such processes, McDonald's has become a leader in the fast food industry and created an entire fast food culture. McDonald's does not merely react to changes but often initiates them itself. For example, the new products introduced, such as Mc Nuggets and Mc Flurry created new trends in fast food consumption. Moreover, these establishments continuously adapt their menus to cater to the

preferences of local customers. For instance, in Asia, rice-based dishes are offered, while in the Middle East, chicken and beef options that comply with religious dietary laws are provided. Frequent time-limited offers create a sense of urgency and encourage customers to return repeatedly. Mobile apps, self-service systems, and partnerships with delivery services allow for a wider reach and optimize the time and cost of fulfilling customer orders.

Booking.com, through its flexibility and innovative approach, has transformed the people plan and book their trips. Thanks to its vast user database, Booking.com can offer personalized recommendations for accommodations, as well as services from restaurants, transportation companies, rental services, tour operators, and more, allowing users to plan their entire trip in one place. Accommodation prices can fluctuate based on demand, booking time, and other factors, allowing the company to optimize revenue and offer users the best deals [4].

Indeed, with flexibility, a business can rapidly adjust to any external environmental changes, irrespective of their nature, such as shifts in demand, new competitors' introduction, or legislative modifications.

The reason flexible business organizations are underpinned by concept or concept sets is that they serve as a foundational framework guiding projects and initiatives.

Moreover, while the signs of flexibility are shaped by the general content of a certain set of concepts for flexible tourism and restaurant businesses (which we identify as a combination of approaches, methods, and tools that allow entrepreneurial, commercial, or any other activities in these industries to quickly adapt to changes in the external environment, customer needs, and available resources), its general features determine the differences in its manifestation (as evidenced by the data in Table 1).

Flexibility manifests itself differently across various contexts. It is specific to each industry and business, depending on their products and customer interactions. Consequently, the concepts of organizational flexibility in the tourism and hospitality sectors exhibit distinct characteristics.

**Table 1. Differences in the implementation of flexibility concepts in tourism and restaurant businesses**

Direction of differentiation	Tourism business	Restaurant business
Product nature	The product is intangible and individualized. Every journey is a unique experience that requires a high level of adaptation to the client's needs.	The product is tangible, but its consumption is also associated with emotions and impressions. The menu, the atmosphere of the establishment, and the service all need to be flexible to satisfy the diverse tastes of customers.
Customer interaction	The client interaction is extensive and spans multiple stages, from trip planning to completion. This requires a longer and deeper engagement with the client.	The interaction with the client is brief but requires a high level of service and attention to detail.
External environment influence	The business is significantly impacted by political, economic, and environmental factors. Geopolitical events, currency fluctuations, and natural disasters can lead to sudden changes in demand for tourism products.	The restaurant industry is affected by seasonality, changes in food trends, and competition with other dining establishments. Geopolitical events, currency fluctuations, and natural disasters can lead to sudden changes in demand for restaurant products.

*Source: formulated by the author based on [1; 2; 5-6].*

When considering the tourism business, we emphasize that it is an economic sector focused on organizing and providing services related to travel and leisure. Factually, it is a whole system that includes various activities, from hotel bookings to organizing tours. This system is carried out by travel agencies, tour operators, hotels, restaurants and cafes, transportation companies, entertainment venues, and establishments that sell souvenirs.

Thus, when considering flexibility in the tourism business, we emphasize that its organization is ensured through the following concepts (Table 2):

1. Personalization (where tourism products and services are tailored to the specific needs, preferences, and characteristics of each traveler [2]);
2. Different experiences as a product (where the tourism product is transformed into a comprehensive experience that encompasses all aspects of the trip [5]);
3. Flexible service packages (which allow for the creation of a custom tour that fully meets the traveler's needs and budget [2]);

4. Micro-segmentation of the market (which enables the creation of more precise and effective marketing campaigns as well as the development of specialized tourism products [2]);
5. Collaboration with local businesses (which supports the local economy, creates an authentic tourism experience, and attracts more discerning travelers [2]);
6. Enhancing the customer experience (which involves creating conditions under which the client derives maximum satisfaction from the trip [5]).

**Table 2. Core concepts of flexibility in the tourism business**

Core concepts	The content of the flexibility concept and its implementation goal	Specifics of creating flexibility
Personalization concept	Creating customized travel itineraries and service packages based on client data. Goal: to increase customer satisfaction, enhance loyalty, and stimulate repeat purchases.	Creation of personalized itineraries, recommendations for dining and entertainment establishments, and selection of hotels based on individual criteria.
Experience as a product concept	Focus on creating unique experiences and emotions for travelers. Goal: To stand out among competitors, create a unique offering, and attract discerning clients.	Custom tours, thematic excursions, participation in local festivals, and exclusive access to landmarks.
Flexible service packages concept	The ability for clients to independently create their travel package by selecting necessary services and modules. Goal: To increase customer satisfaction, improve conversion rates, and attract a broader audience.	Modular tours, where the client can choose the number of days, type of accommodation, excursions, and additional services
Market micro-segmentation	Segmenting clients into smaller groups based on interests, needs, and behavior. Goal: To enhance the effectiveness of marketing campaigns, increase conversion rates, and attract new clients.	Segmentation by age, interests (extreme tourism, cultural tourism, gastronomic tourism), and income level.
Collaboration with local businesses	Collaboration with local producers, restaurants, and tour operators. Goal: To create a unique offering, support the local economy, and enhance customer satisfaction.	Joint projects with local farmers to organize gastronomic tours, and collaboration with local artisans to conduct workshops.
Customer experience enhancement concept	Utilization of mobile apps, chat-bots, virtual reality, and augmented reality. Goal: To increase customer loyalty, enhance the company's reputation, and encourage positive reviews.	Utilizing technology to simplify booking, provide high-quality customer support, and create comfortable living conditions.

*Source: formulated by the author based on [1-2; 5].*

It should be noted that the concepts we have identified for organizing a flexible tourism business are not mutually exclusive; rather, they often complement each



other. For example, personalization can be achieved through market micro-segmentation and collaboration with local businesses.

When analyzing the restaurant business, it's important to note that it encompasses a wide range of activities related to the preparation and serving of food and beverages to customers in specially equipped public eating establishments. Since the scope of the concept is broad (encompassing a variety of establishment formats, from upscale restaurants to simple cafeterias), flexibility in the restaurant business can also be achieved through different organizational concepts. Specifically, these include (see Table 3):

- Personalized menus (within which individual dishes can be created or existing ones modified based on taste preferences, dietary restrictions, and other customer requests [6]);

- Flexible service formats (where the establishment can offer various methods for receiving food and beverages, including both traditional table service and new formats aligned with contemporary trends [3]);

- Flexible ordering and payment (where the use of modern technologies simplifies the ordering and payment process);

- Open-air dining (which involves organizing outdoor seating areas, terraces, or separate zones for preparing and enjoying food outdoors [6]);

- Flexible collaboration with local farmers and producers (which involves using fresh seasonal products to create unique dishes [3]);

- Flexible operating hours (where the establishment can adjust its hours based on the season, day of the week, holidays, and other factors [2; 4]).

A flexible approach in the restaurant business allows for comprehensive interaction between different formats of a single concept [2]. For example, within the personalization concept, a customer can choose the portion size, add extra ingredients, and request modifications to accommodate dietary restrictions.

Within the concept of a flexible service format, customers can order food online, pick it up themselves, or use delivery services. Moreover, these concepts are not mutually exclusive; rather, they often complement each other. For example, personalized menus can be created based on fresh seasonal ingredients from local

farmers, while the flexible service format allows customers to order these dishes online or for delivery.

**Table 3. Core concepts of flexibility in the restaurant business**

Core concepts	The content of the flexibility concept and its implementation goal	Specifics of creating flexibility
Personalized menu concept	Creating personalized menus for each individual or group of customers, taking into account their dietary restrictions, allergies, and taste preferences. Goal: Increase customer satisfaction, raise the average check, and build loyalty.	Creating special menus for vegans, vegetarians, and individuals with food allergies or crafting a customized set menu according to the customer's preferences.
Flexible service format concept	The option to order food for delivery, takeout, or dine in at the restaurant. This involves combining different formats to meet the needs of various customers. Goal: Expand the audience, cater to diverse customer needs, and increase sales.	Food delivery, self-service, food trucks, catering.
Flexible ordering and payment concept	Using mobile apps, online platforms, and other technologies to streamline the ordering and payment process. Goal: Increase service speed, reduce wait times, and enhance customer convenience.	Mobile apps for table reservations and food ordering, online menus, and contactless payment.
Open-air dining concept	Organizing outdoor seating areas, food courts, and other formats that allow guests to enjoy their meals in the open air. Goal: Enhance the restaurant's appeal during the warm season and create an atmosphere of relaxation and leisure.	Barbecue, wood-fired pizzas, grilled dishes.
Flexible collaboration with local farmers and producers concept	Using fresh seasonal ingredients to create unique dishes. Goal: Improve dish quality, reduce ingredient costs, and establish a unique restaurant image.	Creating seasonal menus, using local ingredients in signature dishes, and hosting tastings.
Flexible operating hours concept	Adapting operating hours to seasonality and demand. Goal: Increase profitability and meet the needs of different customer categories.	Extending operating hours on weekends, shortening hours on weekdays, and operating 24/7 during certain periods.

*Source: formulated by the author based on [2-3; 6]*

According to the points outlined, it is evident that flexibility is a core factor for success in modern business. It not only enhances operational efficiency but also creates a competitive advantage in the market through benefits such as:

1. Customer orientation (personalized offers, feedback, loyalty programs);

2. Flexibility in offerings (modular products, seasonal adaptation, a wide range of services);
3. Technological capabilities (online platforms, customer relationship management systems, data analytics);
4. Collaboration (various types of partnerships, working with other companies to share expertise and expand networks);
5. Innovation (seeking new ideas, experimenting, adapting to changes).

***Conclusions from this study and prospects for further exploration in this direction.*** The research confirmed that flexibility is a core factor in the success of the tourism and restaurant industries. The following conclusions were made:

1. The study found that flexibility in the tourism and restaurant industries is a multifaceted concept, encompassing aspects including customer focus, flexibility offerings, technological readiness, collaboration, and innovation.

2. The research results indicate that flexibility is a core factor in modern business success. It enhances operational efficiency and creates a competitive advantage in the market. This is achievable through an individualized approach, personalization of services and products, building long-term relationships with clients, quick response to market changes, seasonality, unforeseen situations, the use of modern technologies (for process optimization, data analysis, and client interaction), collaboration with other companies, suppliers, and partners (for expanding capabilities and creating new products), and continuous pursuit of new ideas and implementation of innovative solutions.

3. The advantages of flexibility are determined by the overall content of the concepts for organizing flexible tourism and restaurant businesses. These concepts are identified as a set of approaches, methods, and tools that enable entrepreneurial, commercial, or any other activities in these sectors to rapidly adapt to changes in the external environment, client needs, and available resources. While the concepts of flexibility in tourism and restaurant businesses share some similarities, their specific manifestations differ. It's due to the unique characteristics of industries, the nature of their products, and their interactions with clients.

The research findings open up broad prospects for further scientific development, including the development of methodologies for quantitatively assessing the level of flexibility in tourism and restaurant businesses, as well as studying the interaction between different components of flexibility.

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