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LOGISTICS AS A STRATEGIC FACTOR OF COMPETITIVENESS IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY: SUCCESS STORIES

ЛОГІСТИКА ЯК СТРАТЕГІЧНИЙ ФАКТОР КОНКУРЕНТОСПРОМОЖНОСТІ В ТУРИСТИЧНІЙ ГАЛУЗІ: КЕЙСИ УСПІХУ

Medvid Larysa

PhD in Economics,

Associate Professor of the Department of Geography and Social Disciplines,
Mukachevo State UniversityORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9386-5211>**Didovych Oleksandr**Postgraduate student of the Department of Accounting, Taxation and Marketing,
Mukachevo State UniversityORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0004-8254-661X>**Yanchyk Ihor**Postgraduate student of the Department of Accounting, Taxation and Marketing,
Mukachevo State UniversityORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-6503-5137>**Медвідь Лариса, Дідович Олександр, Янчик Ігор**

Мукачівський державний університет

The modern tourism market is characterized by a high level of competition, which requires companies to constantly seek new ways to improve the efficiency and quality of their services. Since logistics is a factor affecting the competitiveness of tourism enterprises, its role has significantly increased in recent years, turning into a strategic tool for achieving success. Effective logistics allows for the optimization of all stages of the tourism process, from booking to the client's return home, ensuring high levels of customer satisfaction. Therefore, this article aims to examine the role of logistics as a strategic factor in competitiveness within the tourism industry, using specific success cases as a context. The study used logical analysis and synthesis to confirm that logistics plays a strategic role in the competitiveness of the tourism industry. It involves interconnected processes for effectively planning, organizing, and managing the flow of goods, services, and information related to tourism activities. It was established that the key elements of effective logistics in tourism include planning, transportation, accommodation, excursions and additional services, information technology, and personnel. At the same time, the coordinated interaction of these logistics elements is not natural but artificial, shaped by their ability to cover the entire travel cycle. The coverage effect is the prerequisite for coordinated interaction, as it activates all the points of influence we have outlined. It has been proven that to achieve the maximum coverage effect of the travel cycle through logistics, a comprehensive approach is required, which involves not only the use of modern technologies but also the enhancement of personnel qualifications. This will ensure effective interaction among all links in the logistics chain and contribute to the achievement of the company's strategic goals. In line with the above statements, a potential area for further research is the identification of mechanisms through which big data influences the ability to personalize tourism offerings and improve logistics processes.

Keywords: tourism, logistics, effective planning, booking, "coverage effect".

Сучасний туристичний ринок характеризується високим рівнем конкуренції, що вимагає від бізнесів постійного пошуку нових шляхів підвищення ефективності та якості своїх послуг. Оскільки одним із ключових факторів, що впливають на конкурентоспроможність туристичних підприємств, є логістика, в останні роки її роль значно зросла, перетворившись на стратегічний інструмент досягнення успіху. Наразі ефективна логістика дозволяє оптимізувати всі етапи процесу надання туристичних послуг, від бронювання до повернення клієнта додому, забезпечуючи високий рівень задоволеності споживачів.

Отже, метою статті є дослідження ролі логістики як стратегічного фактора конкурентоспроможності в туристичній галузі на прикладі конкретних успішних кейсів. Проведене дослідження підтвердило, що логістика в туристичній галузі є стратегічним фактором її конкурентоспроможності, оскільки являє собою комплекс взаємопов'язаних процесів, спрямованих на ефективне планування, організацію та управління потоками товарів, послуг та інформації, пов'язаних з туристичною діяльністю.

Ключові слова: туризм, логістика, ефективне планування, бронювання, "ефект охоплення".

Problem statement. Low-cost airlines and online booking services have made travel more accessible to a wide range of consumers. There is increasing demand for customized tours tailored to specific client needs. Various types of niche tourism (such as ecotourism, gastronomic tourism, cultural tourism, etc.) are actively developing, allowing companies to meet the needs of specific market segments. Additionally, clients have access to a wealth of information about tourism products and services, which raises their expectations regarding service quality. Consequently, the modern tourism market is characterized by a high level of competition, requiring companies to constantly seek new ways to enhance the efficiency and quality of their services. Since logistics is a factor affecting the competitiveness of tourism enterprises, its role has significantly increased in recent years, turning into a strategic tool for achieving success. Currently, industry practice demonstrates that effective logistics allows for the optimization of all stages of the tourism process, from booking to the client's return home, ensuring high levels of customer satisfaction.

The analysis of recent researches and publications. In the scientific literature, particularly in the works of researchers such as I. Ye. Zhurba, I. V. Nestorishen, L. O. Gryzovska, and I. H. Smyrnov, there is active research on improving the quality of tourism services and refining tourism logistics. The authors of these studies view logistics in tourism as a complex phenomenon aimed at uniting the efforts of the tourism enterprise and its partners for the effective management of tourist flows and the provision of high-quality services.

However, despite significant attention to this topic, the issues of ensuring the comprehensiveness of logistics processes and their impact on the competitiveness of tourism enterprises remain insufficiently researched. Specifically, there is a lack of scientific works that provide a detailed analysis of the conditions under which logistics transforms into a strategic success factor in the tourism industry.

Goal setting (formulation of goals of the article). The article aims to investigate the role of

logistics as a strategic factor in competitiveness within the tourism industry.

The paper main body with full reasoning of academic results. Logistics in the tourism industry is a complex of interconnected processes aimed at the effective planning, organization, and management of the flow of goods, services, and information related to tourism activities [1]. It encompasses the entire travel cycle, from booking to the return of the traveler's home.

Noted that logistics is a strategic factor in competitiveness due to its direct impact on:

1) on customer satisfaction levels. It should be noted that the points of impact, in this case, are timeliness (as effective logistics ensures the timely provision of services, which is a key factor in tourist satisfaction), safety (as reliable logistics chains guarantee the safety of tourists during their travels), and personalized approach (as logistics allows for a tailored approach to each tourist, considering their individual needs) [4];

2) on cost levels and the price of tourist products. It should be noted that the points of impact, in this case, are route optimization (specifically, effective route planning helps reduce transportation costs), inventory management (optimizing inventory of goods and services helps avoid unnecessary expenses), and process automation (the use of IT solutions automates many routine operations, reducing errors and personnel costs) [4; 6];

3) on the level of operational efficiency. It should be noted that the points of impact, in this case, are the simplification of core and support business processes (specifically, effective logistics streamlines all stages of the tourism process, from booking to payment), improved coordination (thanks to efficient logistics, all participants in the tourism process – tour operators, hotels, airlines – work more cohesively), and increased flexibility (logistics allows for quick adaptation to changes in market conditions and customer needs) [1; 3];

4) on the content of competitive advantage. It should be noted that the points of impact, in this case, are unique offerings (market participants who effectively utilize logistics can create unique

tourist products that stand out from competitors' offerings) and improved image (effective logistics contributes to building a positive image of the business entity as a reliable partner) [6].

Note that the priority is the multiplicity of impact, which simultaneously affects several directions and points of influence we have identified.

According to the authors, key elements of effective logistics in tourism include planning, transportation, accommodation, excursions, additional services, information technologies, and personnel. It is emphasized that the coordinated interaction of these logistical elements is an unnatural occurrence. It is shaped by their ability to encompass the entire travel cycle.

The "coverage effect" in the context of tourism logistics determines how thoroughly logistical processes encompass the entire cycle of a tourist's journey. It includes all stages from initial planning to the return home and is crucial due to its direct impact on the integrity of the tourism product [5]. Thus, this coverage effect is a prerequisite for coordinated interaction, which is realized according to the specifics outlined in Table 1, as it activates all the points of impact we have identified [1; 5].

The statements and formulated principles we have outlined can be most clearly confirmed through existing success cases in the tourism industry. These cases, interpreted by us as detailed descriptions of real situations, illustrate

how specific tourism business entities have achieved significant results by employing certain logistical strategies, methods, or technologies. In other words, in the context of the tourism industry, a success case illustrates how a specific entity was able to enhance its competitiveness through effective logistics.

Success cases in tourism logistics offer opportunities for learning from the experiences of others (including identifying best practices, avoiding mistakes, and gaining inspiration [5]), understanding the reasons behind success (such as the role of logistics in achieving business goals [6]), and comprehending the nature of the interplay between logistics and other factors.

They also facilitate the development of one's own logistical strategies (through others' experiences adaptation and customized solutions creation [5]).

Success cases can be used to justify investments in the development of logistics infrastructure and technologies.

Typically, the elements of a success case in tourism logistics include (see Figure 1):

- the description of the business entity;
- the initial situation;
- the decisions made;
- the results achieved;

Studying success cases in the format outlined above is a crucial step in the refining logistics processes in the tourism industry. Therefore, we will examine some of these cases using

Table 1

Features of the transformation of logistics into a strategic factor of competitiveness in the tourism industry

Key elements of effective logistics in tourism		Fundamental principles of interaction among elements that shape competitiveness
Specification of elements	Characteristics of elements	
Planning	Development of detailed travel plans, including all stages from departure to return	It activates key points of impact, thereby not only reducing costs and improving efficiency but also creating a competitive advantage and ensuring a high level of customer satisfaction. It ensures the integrity of the tourism product. The more thoroughly the travel cycle is covered, the more complete and attractive the product offered to tourists becomes.
Transportation	Organization of transportation for tourists by various means (air, rail, bus)	
Accommodation	Booking hotels and other accommodations according to client requirements	
Excursions and Additional Services	Organization of excursions, transfers, car rentals, and other additional services	
Information Technologies	Use of software for managing bookings, inventories, routes, etc.	
Personnel	Availability of qualified personnel with knowledge in tourism and logistics	

Source: formulated by the author based on [1–2; 4; 6]

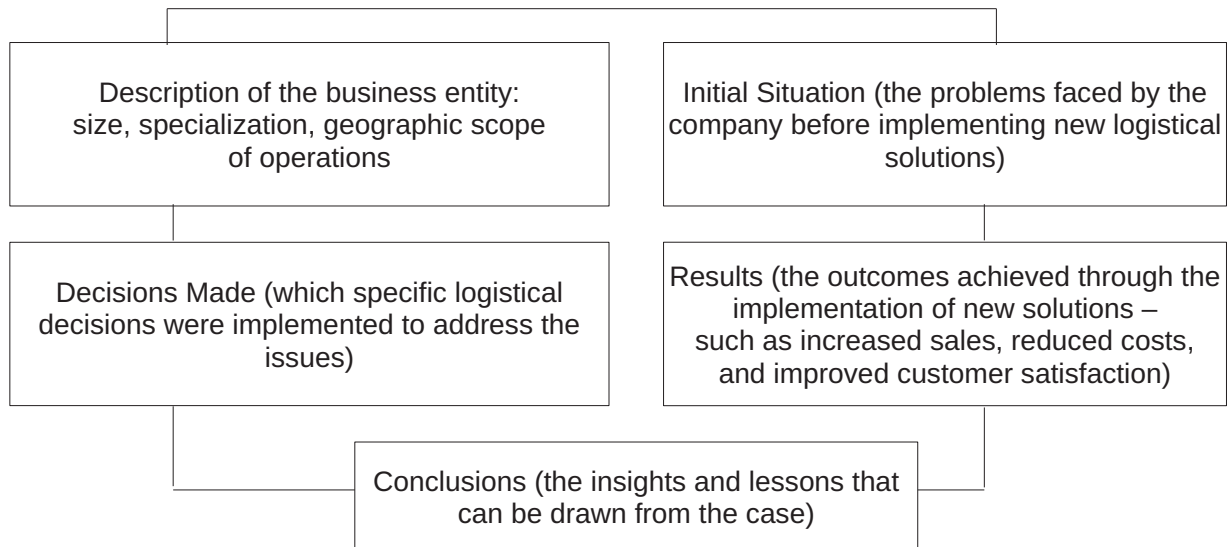


Figure 1. Typical elements of a success case in logistics as a strategic factor of competitiveness in the tourism industry

Source: formulated by the author

examples from travel agencies, considering that they manage the most complex logistics and thus face a wide range of logistical challenges, from booking tickets and hotels to organizing transfers and excursions.

One of the most illustrative success cases is that of the travel agency "Traveling the World" (Lviv). The initial situation for this case was that the agency faced a significant number of canceled bookings due to delays and changes in flight schedules caused by the state of military emergency in Ukraine. This led to customer dissatisfaction and financial losses.

To address this issue, the agency's specialists implemented a real-time flight monitoring system, which was integrated with hotel and transfer booking systems. This allowed for prompt responses to changes in schedules and enabled the offer of alternative options to clients. Additionally, a system for SMS notifications was introduced to keep clients informed about any changes to their travel plans.

The results of these changes were: a reduction in the number of canceled bookings; an increase in client satisfaction; and an improvement in the agency's reputation as a reliable partner.

This case demonstrates that in times of crisis, it is particularly important to be flexible in logistics and to quickly adapt to changes to ensure the smooth operation of the business.

A highly informative success case is that of the travel agency "Discover the World" (Vinnytsia), which specializes in organizing exotic tours.

The initial situation for this case was that in 2021, the agency's clients frequently encountered difficulties during their travels related to a lack of information about local customs, language barriers, and other unforeseen situations. To address this issue, the agency's specialists developed a mobile app that provided detailed information about each country, including maps, safety tips, and information on local attractions and excursions.

Additionally, the app included a feature for emergency contact with a guide or agency representative. The changes resulted in increased client confidence during travel, higher customer loyalty, and more repeat bookings.

This case demonstrates that in the modern business environment, investing in logistical technologies and innovations can be a key success factor in the contemporary tourism industry. In this case, the critical determinant of success in logistics as a strategic factor of competitiveness was that the mobile app not only provided logistical information but also created additional value for the client, making the travel experience more comfortable and secure.

A notable success case is that of the agency "Your Dream" (Kyiv), which specializes in organizing wedding trips. The initial situation for this case was that the agency faced challenges in coordinating the work of various service providers (hotels, restaurants, florists), which led to delays in service delivery to clients and additional costs.

To address this issue, the agency's specialists developed a specialized project management

platform that allowed all parties involved in the wedding trip (the agency, hotel, restaurant, etc. [5]) to access a unified database and track the progress of preparations.

The results of these changes were: improved transparency and management of core business processes; and a high level of service quality and client satisfaction.

This case demonstrates that in the modern business environment, effective interaction between the agency and service providers is a success factor in the contemporary tourism industry. In this case, the key determinant of success in logistics as a strategic factor of competitiveness was that the project management platform allowed for rapid adaptation to changes and provided the ability to make plan adjustments.

For the maximum coverage effect achieved in travel logistics, a comprehensive approach is necessary, including modern technologies use and systematic staff training. The key features of this approach include:

1. Automation of processes, such as Travel Management Systems (TMS), booking and distribution platforms, and analytical tools for demand forecasting and inventory management [4].

2. Establishing effective communication among all stakeholders in the tourism business, including travel agencies, transport providers, hotels, and other service suppliers.

3. Developing and implementing adaptive strategies to quickly respond to changes in market conditions or customer demands. It includes rapidly adjusting route ability, schedules, and other aspects of travel.

4. Analyzing and improving all stages of the logistics chain to ensure efficiency and cost reduction. This may involve managing inventory, routes, transportation costs, and other resources.

5. Creating a pleasant and seamless experience for tourists through enhanced service quality, personalized offers, and ensuring a high level of comfort.

6. Regular monitoring and analysis of data to assess the effectiveness of logistics processes and make informed decisions for their optimization.

Such an approach will ensure the integration of all tourism business entities into a unified logistical chain, creating synergy and promoting effective management of tourist flows.

Conclusions from this study and prospects for further exploration in this direction.

The conducted research confirmed that logistics in the tourism industry is a strategic factor for its competitiveness, as it represents a complex of interconnected processes aimed at effective planning, organization, and management of the flows of goods, services, and information related to tourism activities. The following conclusions have been drawn:

1. Logistics acquires strategic significance as it simultaneously impacts several critical aspects of business: it enhances customer satisfaction through timely service delivery and minimization of errors; reduces costs by optimizing routes, managing inventory, and other processes; affects the cost of tourism products, making them more competitive; increases the overall efficiency of the company; and, finally, creates a unique proposition that distinguishes the company from its competitors.

2. The key elements of effective logistics in tourism include planning, transportation, accommodation, excursions and additional services, information technologies, and personnel. The coordinated interaction of these logistics elements is not a natural phenomenon but an artificial one, shaped by their ability to cover the entire travel cycle. It is precisely this coverage effect that serves as a prerequisite for coordinated interaction, as it activates all the outlined points of influence.

3. For the maximum coverage effect achieved in travel logistics, a comprehensive approach is necessary, which involves not only the application of modern technologies but also the enhancement of personnel qualifications. It will ensure effective interaction among all links in the logistics chain and contribute to the attainment of the company's strategic goals.

According to the outlined points, the area for further research includes the identification of mechanisms through which big data impacts the personalization of tourism offerings and the improvement of logistics processes.

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МУКАЧІВСЬКИЙ ДЕРЖАВНИЙ УНІВЕРСИТЕТ

89600, м. Мукачево, вул. Ужгородська, 26

тел./факс +380-3131-21109

Веб-сайт університету: www.msu.edu.ua

E-mail: info@msu.edu.ua, pr@mail.msu.edu.ua

Веб-сайт Інституційного репозитарію Наукової бібліотеки МДУ: <http://dspace.msu.edu.ua:8080>

Веб-сайт Наукової бібліотеки МДУ: <http://msu.edu.ua/library/>