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Improvement of development and promotion of the product of cultural tourism of the Khmelnytskiy region on the international market

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Аннотация

This paper deals with investigation of cultural tourism potential of Khmelnytsky region of Ukraine. The main methods and directions of Khmelnytskiy region's cultural tourism product design and promotion are explored. The creation of consortium of cultural heritage tourism stakeholders that promote visitation, prolonged stays, and present a unified voice for Khmelnytsky region to foster quality stewardship of local cultural heritage assets is substantiated. The ways for conducting partnership and collaboration inside Khmelnytsky region tourism development field are proposed. The creation of 4 sections strategy of Khmelnytskiy region's cultural tourism development is grounded. There are: 1. Popularization of tourist and recreational potential of Khmelnytsky region and creation of modern positive tourist image; 2. Development and improvement of tourist and recreational infrastructure of the region; 3. Improving the competitiveness of tourist products of the region; 4. Development of marketing and advertising and information activities of the tourism industry in Khmelnytsky region. The evaluation of cultural tourism product design and promotion in Khmelnytskiy region effectiveness is calculated. The specific tour route (Kyiv - Starokostiantyniv - Samchyky – Medzhibizh – Kyiv) for Khmelnytskiy region's cultural tourism promotion with preliminary calculation of tourism product cost is proposed. The forecasting of cultural tourism product further designing & promotion in Khmelnytskiy region as a whole and using specific separate tours (social connectivity, local gastronomy, pilgrimage tourism etc.) is substantiated. After our investigation through global tourism trends, we decided to point out some of separate local tours. “Stay like a local” is a key trend among travelers seeking cultural authenticity as they look to have a more real local experience by sharing

accommodation with locals. Social connectivity is an emerging trend among cultural tourists as travelers show more concern towards social issues and are aware of the positive impact they can have. Exploring local gastronomy enables travelers to hone their culinary skills and experience different aspects of their destination's everyday life. With pilgrimage tourism undergoing continuous transformations in recent years, pilgrimages or religious tourism is considered a subset of cultural tourism and play a key role in Khmelnytskyi region. The competition of Khmelnytskyi region's cultural tourism on the world tourist market is investigated. There are the main factors of Khmelnytskyi region competition growing in tourism field: the emergence of an increasing number of countries that choose tourism and resorts of Khmelnytskyi region as a priority area of economic development; fierce competition at the level of corporate strategies (including cases of rapid price reduction - dumping); achieving natural maxima of some forms and types of tourism offered by Khmelnytskyi region.

Ключевые слова: cultural tourism, Khmelnytskyi region, Ukraine, tourism product, product design, product promotion, international tourism market

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¹ **Introduction.** In Ukraine, the development of tourism industry has traditionally been given insufficient attention at the national level, and the implementation of regional development through the mechanism of subventions for socio-economic development of regions did not and does not allow to get rid of asymmetry in regional development.

² A similar situation occurred at the regional level. The lack of system and coordination of all tourism industry development actors in the region has led to a lack of tourism resources and the formation of undeveloped tourism infrastructure. The region needs a system of measures to help develop culture and cultural heritage tourism. Also, it is necessary to create a calendar of events for further promotion of the region and cities separately.

³ **The purpose of the study** consists in investigation of cultural tourism product design and promotion of Khmelnytskyi region of Ukraine on national and international market of tourist services.

⁴ **The objectives of the study include:** analyzing of methods and directions of Khmelnytskyi region's cultural tourism product design and promotion; creating a consortium of cultural heritage tourism stakeholders that promote visitation, prolonged stays, and present a unified voice for Khmelnytskyi region to foster quality stewardship of local cultural heritage assets; conducting partnership and collaboration inside Khmelnytskyi region tourism development field; creating a 4 sections strategy of Khmelnytskyi region's cultural tourism development; evaluating the effectiveness of

cultural tourism product design and promotion in Khmelnytskiy region; creating a specific tour route (Kyiv — Starokostiantyniv — Samchyky — Medzhibizh — Kyiv) for Khmelnytskiy region's cultural tourism promotion with preliminary calculation of tourism product cost; forecasting of cultural tourism product further designing & promotion in Khmelnytskiy region as a whole and using specific separate tours (social connectivity, local gastronomy, pilgrimage tourism etc.); investigating competition of Khmelnytskiy region's cultural tourism on the world tourist market.

⁵ **Scientific state of problem knowledge and the novelty of the study.** The analysis of recent scientific publications showed that investigations of cultural tourism design and promotion in different regions of Ukraine are proposed by different famous Ukrainian scientists: A. A. Beydyk, O. A. Lyubitseva, V. P. Rudenko, T. I. Tkachenko and others. In particular, the peculiarities of location and organization of cultural tourism potential of Khmelnytsky region are disclosed in the works of O. V. Zastavetskaya, B. I. Zastavetskyi, I. L. Ditchuk, S. A. Kovalev, V. O. Jaman, O. V. Humeniuk, M. Ya. Malska, V. V. Khudo, V. I. Tsybukh, L. M. Cherchyk, K. I. Gerenchuk and others. However, further investigation of Khmelnytsky region cultural tourism product design and promotion will be connected with research of possible ways for improving the promotion of tourism products on the international market.

⁶ **Research information base.** The proposed investigation is based on free analytical, statistical and informational papers downloaded from open-access Internet resources of the Ministry of Statistics of Ukraine, from Khmelnytsky Regional State Administration Website as well as from a number of free open-access bulletins of different national and international companies and organizations related to tourism development research. We have used the number of qualitative and quantitative methods. The process of the scientific research is based on the review of existed literature on this topic, analysis of current state of cultural and heritage tourism product promotion and design in Khmelnytsky region. The next research methods were used: analysis, synthesis, project management methods, tour route creation methods, tourism product cost calculation methods, evaluation of tourism production promotion effectiveness. In this scientific work the new forecasting of cultural and heritage tourism product promotion and design in Khmelnytsky region was developed as well as the complex of improvement measures for tourism industry was proposed.

⁷ **The results of investigation. Methods and directions of Khmelnytskiy region's cultural tourism product design and promotion.** The priority activities for Khmelnytsky region of Ukraine are the formation of a brand and a positive image of different tourism destinations. This could be reached by defining goals, vision and mission, creating a qualitative tourism strategy, marketing actions and PR activities. To begin qualitative promotion of Khmelnytsky region tourism product we should set goals and develop vision and mission. After that a qualitative tourism strategy should be proposed.

⁸ Our vision is that Khmelnytsky region community are a collaborative, communicative and creative consortium of cultural heritage tourism stakeholders that promote visitation, prolonged stays, and present a unified voice for Khmelnytsky region to foster quality stewardship of local cultural heritage assets, stimulate economic prosperity for local businesses, and enhance resident's quality of life.

⁹ Our mission is to enhance the economic and social prosperity of Khmelnytsky region by promoting and delivering quality cultural heritage experiences to tourists while respecting and protecting the county's unique and diverse ecosystems, environments, history, lifestyles and cultures [3].

¹⁰ Our first goal is conducting partnership and collaboration: – Improve collaboration and communication among all cultural heritage tourism stakeholders; – Strengthen partnerships among all cultural, historical, and historic preservation stakeholder organizations and government agencies to foster greater public access, quality experiences, increased visitation, and stewardship.

¹¹ Second goal is experience development and product enhancement: – Encourage providers to expand existing or create new cultural heritage tourism experience (products or programs) to increase non-peak-season visitation and spending in Khmelnytsky region; – Develop county-wide interpretive products to share the history and culture of Khmelnytsky region peoples, industry, and place; – Work with partners to preserve, protect and enhance historic and cultural sites through sustainable policies, stewardship programs, and increased funding.

¹² Third goal is marketing development:

- Establish unified messaging and marketing platform to respectfully promote Khmelnytsky region cultural heritage experiences;
- Cross-market cultural heritage activities and attractions with other like venues (i.e. museums promote visitation to each other) to encourage multi-site visitation throughout the region;
- Cross-market cultural heritage activities with recreation-based experiences to encourage tourists to stay longer in Khmelnytsky region.

¹³ Also, to help the Khmelnytskiy region develop the tourism industry, we have created a strategy for its development. The strategy consists of 4 sections namely [7; 9]:

- 1) Popularization of tourist and recreational potential of Khmelnytsky region and creation of modern positive tourist image;
- 2) Development and improvement of tourist and recreational infrastructure of the region;
- 3) Improving the competitiveness of tourist products of the region;
- 4) Development of marketing and advertising and information activities of the tourism industry in Khmelnytsky region.

¹⁴ The purpose of this strategy is to form a comprehensive system of measures that, based on the understanding of the current situation and the level of development of Khmelnytsky region will be able to ensure the dynamics of change in the direction of forming a good tourist infrastructure in the city.

¹⁵ The strategy is structured in such a way that during its implementation it will affect the current formation of tourism industry development, as well as activities within the city for the period before and after 2025 year.

¹⁶ **Evaluation of the effectiveness of cultural tourism product design and promotion in Khmelnytskiy region.** After defining how we want to see Khmelnytskiy region in the near future by creating vision and mission, setting goals, and creating a

tourism development strategy in order to promote the Khmelnytskiy region on the international market the next step should be the creation of actual tourist products as a part of PR activities. We decided to create the 3-day tour to the Khmelnytskiy region that will include the different tourism destinations. We will start tour from the capital of Ukraine – Kyiv, to satisfy the needs of domestic and international tourists. The tour route: Kyiv — Starokostiantyniv — Samchyky — Medzhibizh — Kyiv (table 1). To evaluate the effectiveness of cultural tourism product design and promotion in Khmelnytskiy region we should do the calculation of the proposed tour [1; 4]. Considering prices for such services, we come to the following costs per person which calculated in the table 2.

17 *Table 1* Program of the tour in Khmelnitskiy region

Arrival time	Stop duration	Departure time	Location
Day 1			
08:00	15 min	08:15	Meeting near metro station Zhytomyrska in Kyiv, departure
12:00	15 min	12:15	Arriving to the Starokostiantyniv city
12:15	1 hour	13:15	Lunch
13:30	1,5 hours	15:00	Excursion to the castle of the Ostroh princes
15:15	1 hour	16:15	Boat trip on the river Sluch
16:30	1,5 hours	18:00	Excursion to the historical and cultural center-museum "Old Starokostiantyniv"
18:15	1 hour	19:15	Picnic on the river Sluch
19:30	30 min	20:00	Check-in to the hotel «Sluch»
Day 2			
08:00	1 hour	9:00	Breakfast
9:10	30 min	09:40	Check-out from the hotel «Sluch»
09:40	20 min	10:00	Meeting in the hotel lobby, departure to the Samchyky village.
10:00	20 min	10:20	Arriving to the Samchyky village
10:30	1,5 hours	12:00	Excursion of the village
12:00	1 hour	13:00	Lunch in an ethno cafe
13:10	1,5 hours	14:40	Master class with one of the masters of Samchykivka painting
15:00	1,5 hours	16:30	Excursion of the historical and cultural reserve "Samchyky"
17:00	1 hour	18:00	Picnic on the river Sluch
18:20	1,5 hours	19:50	Departure to the Medzhibizh
19:50	10 min	20:00	Arriving to the Medzhibizh village
20:00	30 min	20:30	Check-in to the hotel «Medzhibozh Castle»
Day 3			
08:00	1 hour	09:00	Breakfast
09:00	30 min	09:30	Check-out from the hotel
10:00	1,5 hours	11:30	Excursion to the Medzhibizh Castle
12:00	1 hour	13:00	Lunch

13:30	1 hour	14:30	Excursion to the Holodomor Museum
15:00	1 hour	16:00	Excursion to the ruins of the Trinity Church
16:30	1 hour	17:30	Excursion to the ancient Jewish cemetery
17:30	4,5 hours	22:00	Departure to the Kyiv
22:00	10 min	22:10	Arriving to the Kyiv, finish of the tour

Source: prepared by author.

¹⁸ *Table 2 Calculation of the tourism product cost*

No.	Cost item	For group (20 people)	For 1 person (UAH)
1	Bus rental, including fuel and driver's salary	15000	750
2	Accommodation (including breakfast)	16000	800
3	Entrance tickets to the museums	3000	150
4	Excursion services	4000	200
5	Participant maintenance costs	2500	125
6	Food (picnics)	4800	240
7	Boat trips on the river	800	40
8	Master class	800	40
9	The cost of production	46900	2345
10	Profit of the tour operator	7035	352
11	Price without tax	53935	2697
12	VAT	10787	539
13	Price after tax	64722	3236

Source: prepared by author.

¹⁹ In a total it would be 3236 UAH, which is approximately 95 EUR and it is low price for the international tourist and competitive price for domestic tourist.

²⁰ It is essential to attract private stakeholders or sponsors to support such an idea and persuade the government agencies to put such an event in the calendar of events. After that, we can entice new tourists who will be interested in a fresh, modern tourist product.

²¹ With competent digital promotion, such simple tour can attract new visitors and increase brand awareness among the tourists in Ukraine and abroad.

²² The tour is suitable for tourists who want to discover new places and new facets of Ukrainian culture. The tour is suitable for guides and travel agencies that can interest their customers in a new tourist route without significant costs. Also, the tour is suitable for heads of HR-departments, who can organize an interesting corporate event at an affordable price [6].

²³ The Samchyky village definitely should promote their events on the Internet. Such tools as Google Display Ads, Google Text Ads and YouTube Video Ads could be used to advertise the mentioned above events, also if we are talking about social media Facebook Ads could be the great choice. Google Analytics can help to track traffic and size of the advertising campaign. It would be wise to firstly advertise Ukrainian tourism

products on the adjacent countries such as Poland, Belarus, Hungary, Slovakia, Moldova, Romania, Czech Republic.

²⁴ **Forecasting of cultural tourism product further designing & promotion in Khmelnytskiy region.** To forecast further cultural tourism product designing and promotion in Khmelnytskiy region we should consider global trends in the tourism industry. It will give us a better understanding of what to expect next and to what we should be prepared to quickly catch the latest trend and include it in our marketing strategy and adapt it to our tourist product. Notable trends in the international tourism market in recent years are increasing diversification of tourism products, search for new tourist destinations, development of technological base (including in the field of information technology), reducing the average duration of trips, expanding the choice of alternative accommodation and transport, and rapid rising prices [8].

²⁵ The development of the world tourist market is negatively affected by the growing level of political tension between individual countries, the increase in the number of terrorist acts, high prices, economic crisis in some countries and regions of the world. Experts point to a trend of rapidly increasing the number of trips to neighboring countries within continents. This is facilitated by the facilitation of visa regimes and the active work of leading tourist countries to promote the national tourist product, especially in neighboring countries [10].

²⁶ After our investigation through global tourism trends, we decided to point out some of them. “Stay like a local” is a key trend among travelers seeking cultural authenticity as they look to have a more real local experience by sharing accommodation with locals and include creative elements that can provide perspective with the goal of transforming travelers into more rounded human beings. It has been observed that millennials are actively interested in this type of tourism and mingle with local people to experience new cultures [5].

²⁷ Peer-to-peer sharing site Airbnb has expanded its offering and created a space for tourists seeking an authentic local experience by enlisting a few hosts on its website to provide tours. These hosts engage with consumers to provide a real local experience during their travels. It is an excellent opportunity for tourism players to capitalize on these travelers by partnering with local tourism players or guides who can add authentic, local elements to each trip [2; 3].

²⁸ Social connectivity is an emerging trend among cultural tourists as travelers show more concern towards social issues and are aware of the positive impact they can have. Tourism players are capitalizing on this segment by providing packages that are more explicitly designed towards social aspects. They are also including volunteer programs in their packages, which focus on giving back to communities as part of a more enriching cultural experience. With the growing interest of travelers in social welfare and developing local communities, it is expected that the social connectivity tourism trend will gain more mainstream popularity in the future [5].

²⁹ Exploring local gastronomy enables travelers to hone their culinary skills and experience different aspects of their destination’s everyday life. Players in culinary tourism are attracting cultural tourists by offering a wide range of workshops and courses on gastronomy, enabling travelers to enhance their cooking interests and see a

different side of a destination and its culture. It is expected that creativity in gastronomy is likely to grow in the future, due to curiosity among tourists to develop their skills, giving them a distinct link to local cuisines such as ‘how to make Fois Gras in France or pasta in Italy’, and the rising interest in gastronomic tourism more generally. This is an opportunity for tourism players to engage with food festivals or events and design packages in a way to give both a creative and personalized experience to consumers seeking access to local and authentic culture through gastronomy [12; 13].

³⁰ With pilgrimage tourism undergoing continuous transformations in recent years, pilgrimages or religious tourism is considered a subset of cultural tourism. Globally, a pilgrimage or religious tourism is one of the fastest-growing segments. Tourism players in the market are connecting with the arts and cultural communities and offering holiday packages that can provide a religious-cum-cultural itinerary for the travelers. Either through specific pilgrimages such as participating in Hajj in Mecca or through tours that allow a traveler to reconnect with specific aspects of their religion, such as walking the Way of the Cross in Jerusalem. It is expected that pilgrimages and religious tourism will grow in the future as it benefits from being part of both the group and individual tourism trends; being less prone to the economic crisis as it serves a deeper purpose than traditional travel and can attract travelers of all ages and nationalities. This is an opportunity for tourism players to ensure that the most prominent or compelling religious locations and events are supported by carefully curated packages that give a unique and long-lasting spiritual and cultural experience to their clients [16].

³¹ Changes in the geopolitical environment, socio-economic development, modernization of information technology have significantly affected the dynamics of international tourism, led to the transformation of the tourism industry with a focus on meeting the various individual needs of travelers. Most foreign tourists when choosing a travel route or vacation spot focus on a high level of service, reasonable value for money, as well as the possibility of a safe stay [10; 11].

³² At the same time, the global tourism industry is facing relatively new challenges, the most significant of which is the growing level of competition between the leading tourism powers. Broad (including aggressive) measures of advertising influence on potential consumers of tourist services have become the norm. The growth of the level of competition in the world tourist market is due to several factors [3; 5; 9; 14]:

- the emergence of an increasing number of countries that choose tourism and resorts as a priority area of economic development;
- fierce competition at the level of corporate strategies (including cases of rapid price reduction — dumping);
- achieving natural maxima of some forms and types of tourism offered by some countries.

³³ Unfortunately, Ukraine loses in this competition, lagging behind the world's leading countries in the level of development of tourist infrastructure in 5–15 times. The most significant lag is observed in terms of the provision of the population with hotel services, the number of people employed in tourism per 1,000 citizens, the number of labor costs for the purchase of the right to stay in a hotel, etc. The pace and structure of development of tourism and resorts in Ukraine do not meet modern challenges [15].

Conclusions. Khmelnytsky region tourism development is based on cultural and historical monuments, natural resources, nature reserve fund. The good strategy, correctly set goals and planned actions can contribute to the effectiveness of your tourism product design and promotion. Consumers are expected to be more open to exploring new cultural activities and more likely to experience new local authenticities. Rapid growth in international travel and increasing traveler sophistication is expected to fuel curiosity and the growth in cultural tourism. Organization of tours and tourism events creates opportunity for people to discover new places, helps strengthen the destination brand, increase brand awareness and contributes to the word-of-mouth marketing. Trends such as “stay like local”, social connectivity, cultural gastronomy, and historic culture are expected to remain highly influential within cultural tourism. Destinations must embrace their tangible and intangible resources and incorporate elements in their tourism offerings. In particular countries with rich cultural traditions should focus on the development of cultural tourism and provide incentives for local businesses to invest in this segment. It is essential that the authenticity of the destination is not dampened by increased tourism flows; this is a key challenge for locations and the industry. Tourism boards, hotels, and resorts operating predominantly in rural areas must partner with local hosts to create unique cultural experiences. This will have a positive trickle-down effect on both tourism businesses and local hosts. Also, this will create a complete tourism experience, allowing the industry to benefit from word-of-mouth recommendations. Hotels willing to target cultural tourists must develop a series of highly authentic cultural activities or partner with external providers offering such services.

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