THE ROLE OF INFORMATION AND MOBILE TECHNOLOGY IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY
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РОЛЬ ИНФОРМАЦИОННЫХ И МОБИЛЬНЫХ ТЕХНОЛОГИЙ В ТУРИСТСКОЙ ИНДУСТРИИ
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Abstract: *the article looks at the role that information technology plays in the tourism industry from both the company's and the consumer's point of view and describes the importance of the Internet and social networking in tourism. On the enterprise side, the article reviews some modern office suites, which increase enterprise productivity thanks to compatibility with mobile devices, among other things. It also lists some of the popular technologies and online services for tourism, which, when used actively and correctly, allows businesses in the tourism industry to significantly improve their competitive ability and accessibility to potential clients.*

Аннотация: *данная статья рассматривает роль, которую информационные технологии играют в туристской сфере экономики, с точки зрения предприятий и потребителей, а также описывает важность Интернета и социальных сетей в туризме. С точки зрения предприятия в статье рассматриваются современные офисные сюты, увеличивающие эффективность предприятия, в т. ч. за счёт совместимости с мобильными устройствами. В ней также приводится перечисление некоторых популярных технологий и онлайн-сервисов для туризма, грамотное и активное использование которых современными туристскими предприятиями позволяет значительно повысить их конкурентоспособность и доступность для потенциальных клиентов.*

Keywords: *IT, mobile technology, tourism, Internet, apps.*
Ключевые слова: *ИТ, мобильные технологии, туризм, Интернет, приложения.*

Modern life is inextricably linked with information technology, which is used in every industry today. The sheer volume of data that requires analysis and processing, as well as the ever-rising amount of competition between companies, mean that IT integration is a bare necessity, and that the use of modern developments in IT plays an equally important role. One such modern development is the continuing process of adapting mobile devices to more and more tasks that were exclusively handled by computers before.

The service industry benefits especially from IT integration, and many new developments, especially in the realm of social networking, translate directly into improved efficiency and returns for businesses. One important area of the service sector where IT has very high potential is the tourism industry, where leveraging new technologies enables greater exposure for businesses and makes it easier for customers to make more informed choices [1].

Today, a modern business in the tourism industry cannot exist without electronic record keeping and data storage. This functionality is provided by collections of productivity software, otherwise known as office suites. A typical office suite includes a word processor for creating and editing documents, a spreadsheet for various accounting and financial tasks, a slide show presentation program and a database management system (DBMS). For instance, arguably the most popular office suite, Microsoft Office, contains all of these applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Access, respectively), as well as some others, such as an email client (Outlook) and a notebook (OneNote). Using office suites correctly and to their full potential allows a significant increase in work efficiency on one hand and a significant decrease of document lookup and operation times on the other. And, while using office suites in the past implied certain investments, which forced some businesses to use inferior alternatives or unlicensed copies, today there is a number of free (LibreOffice) and flexibly-priced (Google Docs, Office 365) solutions for businesses of different sizes. It should be noted that many of the office suites that exist today are compatible with mobile devices, and office software developers like Microsoft and Google are now making it a priority to ensure compatibility with mobile devices [2]. This means that the owner or an employee of a business in the tourism industry can take their work anywhere and at any time.

Different services and applications designed for tourists are also widely used in the industry. This segment of the market is especially diverse and includes services for booking rooms in hotels, renting accommodation, transportation services, car rentals, as well as services for finding free accommodation ("couchsurfing") and interesting local landmarks and attractions. The most popular services are those that offer customer feedback

about hotels, restaurants, bars and other tourist attractions—services like TripAdvisor, Foursquare, Google Reviews, Yelp, and others. Modern companies that wish to attract more visitors should leverage these services to maintain a presence on the web, since the majority of searches today is done online. As such, at the planning stage an average user interacts with different services approximately 200 times a month when looking for the necessary information [3].

Due to the accelerated rate of globalisation, especially in the IT industry, many of the aforementioned services are used in the context of Russian tourism as well. Businesses in cities with a developed tourism infrastructure leverage the benefits of online services for marketing, however a large number of businesses still adhere to traditional practices in advertising and marketing, which significantly reduces the number of their potential clients. One important category of national Russian tourism services are those that deal with transport, such as Yandex.Taxi, Tutu.ru and others. Recently created services for the Crimean peninsula, such as Gosavtobus and Gosparom, deserve a special mention, and are currently enjoying popularity.

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