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THE ROLE OF INFLUENCERS AND SOCIAL NETWORKS IN SHAPING THE INTERNATIONAL IMAGE OF TOURISM COMPANIES

In the context of globalization, the tourism industry faces the need to build a sustainable international image. Traditional promotion channels are gradually giving a way to digital platforms. Social networks have changed the way people plan their trips, including how they purchase and consume tourism products. Moreover, this has fundamentally transformed the role of intermediaries, which is now performed by influencers [1]. So, the purpose of the abstract is to analyze how social networks and influences contribute to international image making of tourism companies.

Modern travelers rely not only on official company websites but also on personal recommendations from bloggers, opinion leaders, and other users, making social media one of the most important tools of marketing communications. In today's world, social networks are a powerful instrument for image building. They allow tourism companies to communicate brand values and unique offers. Thanks to visual content (photos, videos, stories), emotional perception is formed and customer trust is strengthened. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and Facebook have become global communication channels between organizations and their audiences.

Influencers (from the English influence — to affect) play an important role in shaping the international image of tourism companies. They are opinion leaders around whom loyal audiences gather [2]. Influencers act as intermediaries between the brand and the consumer, creating trust through personal experience. The content they produce is perceived as more authentic than traditional advertising. Cooperation with bloggers enables tourism companies to enter international markets and adapt communication to cultural specifics.

Reviews and recommendations from influencers create a sense of safety and confidence among audiences. The positive image of an organization is reinforced through the viral spread of content, while social proof reduces barriers to purchasing tourism products. Thus, social networks erase boundaries: content instantly becomes accessible to a global audience. Tourism companies use influencers to promote their services in different countries, taking into account local cultural characteristics.

Considering practical examples of engaging influencers and social networks, the most common cases include: major airlines and hotel chains actively cooperating with travel bloggers to promote new routes and services; campaigns involving influencers that allow brands to create

unique stories perceived as personal experiences; successful cases show that audience engagement is higher when authentic content is used compared to traditional advertising.

In conclusion, it should be noted that influencers and social networks play a key role in shaping the international image of tourism companies. They provide direct communication with a global audience, build trust, and foster emotional attachment to the brand. In the context of globalization, digital channels become the main promotion tool, while cooperation with opinion leaders serves as a strategic resource for strengthening positions in the global market.

References

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3-е место по итогам работы секции

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SUSTAINABILITY IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

At present, the hospitality industry is one of the fastest-growing industries all over the world, and its impact on the planet is similarly expanding. Sustainable hospitality is stepping forward to protect nature by reducing the environmental impact of hotels and restaurants. In this context, the aim of this study is to identify potential strategies for the hospitality sector to minimize its ecological footprint.

To begin with, hotels are one of the biggest consumers of water, energy and resources in general. Therefore, one of the important initiatives for the hospitality industry is to use water conservation, low flow showers, laundry efficiency and water recycling systems to save water. It is stated that water-efficient bathrooms alone can cut use by 15%, lowering costs and reducing environmental impact [1]. Another effective practice that can be implemented in every hotel is the request to place towels in the bath if guests want them washed rather than having them washed