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# APPLICATION OF SWOT ANALYSIS TO JUSTIFY THE STRATEGY OF HOTEL BUSINESS ENTERPRISES

One of the important areas of action in Ukraine is the restoration of the sphere of activity of hotels with the reduction of restrictions after COVID-19 in the conditions of the Russian Federation's war against Ukraine. Using the experience of hotels in other countries will be useful in restoring the tourism industry in Ukraine. Disadvantages in the operation of hotels arise from the fact that management decisions are sometimes made intuitively, modern innovative management methods, such as SWOT analysis, are not used.

The object of the research is the influence of the owner and management on the review of the business strategy in the critical use of the hotel's capabilities with the help of SWOT analysis. The problem of improving business management was solved at the stage of considering options for improving the hotel's operations. The results were to show the chance of choosing the optimal business strategy when systematically considering options for management decisions regarding the future of the hotel using SWOT analysis techniques. When applying a SWOT analysis, the weaknesses and strengths of the hotel are modeled; but it requires special statistical knowledge.

In the paper, based on the processing of studied of the hospitality industry, examples of SWOT analysis experience for the implementation of business strategy by hotels in countries with a developed tourism market are indicated. Consolidated information is formed on the components of a SWOT analysis of a hotel business strategy according to the authors' proposals. The process of SWOT analysis in improving the activity of Ukrainian hotels at the stage of planning and implementation of strategic directions is revealed. The formation of an information base is outlined with an integrated approach in the process of implementation. Organizational measures for implementing the hotel strategy according to SWOT analysis are indicated. Conclusions are drawn and directions for further research are shown.

The obtained results are the process of making management decisions based on a set of market data, which determines the application of a certain sequence of recognized stages (algorithm). A SWOT analysis, which was prepared by eliminating all the ideas of the participants and ranking them in order of importance, will combine a large problem into a report that is more understandable to individuals and must be put into practice by them.

**Keywords:** SWOT analysis, hotel business strategy, tourism, innovative management methods, management decisions based on SWOT analysis.

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## 1. Introduction

In order for tourism to become a global economic catapult again after the recession of 2020–2022 and revival in 2023, extraordinary commercial, financial and organizational measures are being taken. Competitive advantages due to the full mobilization of internal potential and minimization of the negative impact of external factors cause activation of the factors of understanding the environment and managing the hotel. Justification of management decisions and evaluation of their results in the field of business strategy of hotels using SWOT analysis allows increasing the competitiveness of Ukrainian hotels. Based on the use of the work of researchers and the best experience of hotels in countries with a developed tourist market, the functionality of SWOT analysis is

revealed through the specification of the results of scientific research, the summary of information on the content of the components of SWOT analysis. The ability of the information complex to support the business strategy of hotels is indicated.

A literary analysis showed that:

- the researchers considered the SWOT analysis as part of a practical toolkit of hotel business enterprise development strategies [1];
- the SWOT matrix serves as a basis for choosing a marketing strategy [2];
- an educational example of analyzing environmental factors and developing a plan using SWOT analysis [3] is considered;
- the evaluation of the market component of the innovative potential can be carried out using the SWOT analysis

- method, according to which the factors of the market environment are divided into groups [4];
- the basics of using SWOT analysis and brainstorming as analytical tools are given [5];
  - an assessment of the state of the hotel services market is given [6];
  - reviewed tourism features [7];
  - assessed SWOT matrix [8];
  - reviewed revenue recovery [9];
  - online booking analysis [10];
  - evaluation of green hotels [11];
  - reviewed various types of strategies [12];
  - the tactics of combating COVID-19 are highlighted [9, 11];
  - the researchers used complex mathematical tools [9].

The detailed contribution of researchers in the application of SWOT analysis in hotel business strategy is outlined in the article below. At the same time, researchers have not paid due attention to the responsibility of using this method: companies should use SWOT analysis as a guide, not necessarily as a recipe [13]. From this follows fundamental informational and methodical work at the stages of preparation, implementation and implementation of the results of this universal method into the business strategy of each hotel.

*The aim of research* is to form a methodological and informational basis in the process of SWOT analysis and to argue for the modernization of the hotel sector of Ukraine with the use of SWOT analysis based on the review of scientific research materials on the practice of hotel operations when they use SWOT analysis.

## 2. Materials and Methods

**2.1. Research methods.** In order to achieve the purpose set, the experience of using elements of SWOT analysis in hotels of countries with a developed tourist market was used. And the following methods were used:

- historical-logical – to establish important predecessors of SWOT analysis in hotels;
- logical-abstract – expanding information from literary sources and from experience on the issue, summarizing researchers' summaries about SWOT analysis is highlighted in this article;
- analytical-synthetic – processing the received information and synthesizing the results in the form of a table of consolidated information on the content of the SWOT analysis and summarizing the SWOT analysis for hotels of Ukraine.

**2.2. Presenting main material.** In Ukraine, revenues from the tourism industry to the state budget in the last three quarters of 2022, according to the tax service, decreased by almost 34 % compared to the same period last year. Hotels paid more taxes – almost 673 million hryvnias. However, this figure is 35 % lower compared to the same period in 2021. At the same time, the indicators of paid tax for nine months of 2022 increased in a number of regions, in particular:

- Lviv (197 million against last year's 151 million);
- Ivano-Frankivsk (136 million – against almost 104 million);
- Kyiv region (120 million – against almost 89 million) [14].

Actions to restore the hotel business in Ukraine are overdue.

## 3. Results and Discussion

**3.1. The contents of the SWOT analysis in the implementation of the hotel's strategy.** Intentions to remain in the business environment and to win in the competition encourage enterprises to make informed management decisions. Among the directions of the company's activity, the leading place is occupied by its strategy. In general, strategy is understood as a set of plans, decisions and tasks that must be implemented to achieve the organization's goals. Economic theory considers various types of enterprise strategies – analysis, generalization, globalization, search, competition, response, etc. [15]. Strategic areas of hotel management are considered to be:

- consolidation of hotels and the formation of associations of hotels;
- joining associations, including through the acquisition of a franchise of a leading hotel chain;
- a significant increase in the level of service;
- price optimization;
- the adoption of a master marketing plan;
- optimization of the range of services;
- a new hospitality strategy;
- the transition from seasonal loading to year-round operation of the hotel;
- the prerogative of a conference hotel;
- the formation of an eco-hotel, etc.

**3.2. Benchmarking examples of the use of SWOT analysis in the implementation of the business strategy of hotels.**

A SWOT analysis was conducted and the strategic prospects of expanding the hotel network in Kyiv were assessed [6]. Considered the regional features of tourism on the sea coast in terms of competition with hotels in neighboring countries, the SWOT analysis was used to formulate hotel business strategy [7]. An overall assessment of the SWOT matrix for hotel business strategy is given, and SWOT analysis and other measures were used to study perceived situations and trends in the industry, the theoretical approach to time measurement was confirmed. A significant statistical relationship was noted the relationship between the external and internal environment and the dynamics of top management team members [8]. Strategies to restore hotel revenues, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic were developed [9]. Conducted an analysis of online bookings, conducted a review of the company's position [10]. Through the application of SWOT analysis with a combination of the fuzzy analytical process hierarchy (F-AHP) and the method «Order of preference by similarity to the ideal solution» (TOPSIS) made it possible to develop strategies for restoring hotel revenues. Hotel development strategies were considered in different scenarios of the situation with the COVID-19 pandemic [9]. Based on the results of SWOT analysis, intensive and integrative strategies were considered by scientists [12]. The study reflects the initiative of using SWOT analysis to evaluate green hotels on the island of Bali (Indonesia). Business practices of green hospitality, discounts, and different packages of tour products. The possibility of obtaining an anti-COVID certificate as a means of promoting the readiness of the hotel to receive guests during the

pandemic [11], the model of situational SWOT analysis was applied [9].

The researchers expressed their views on improving the SWOT analysis method.

Let's present in the form of a table the vision of experts regarding the main characteristics of the business strategy of hotels based on a SWOT analysis, Table 1.

Table 1 reveals the peculiarities of the sphere of hotel activity, which is sensitive to threats from the natural environment and human health hazards, political events. And, due to the human factor, requires the use of specific management techniques – hotel technologies and innovations, consideration of recreation safety, aesthetics, sanitary standards, consideration of culture, provision of high-quality services, and support from the state and community, implementation of certain compliance tactics and strategies. The imperative influence of favorable weather conditions on a person is taken into account (air and sea temperature, absence of factors of natural disaster and war, peace and confidence in safety, communication with nature and human culture).

The information compiled by the researchers due to their statistical processing of the questionnaires of hotel managers, despite the subjective factor, has value, because the professional respondents expressed their opinion a posteriori, that is, taking into account the acquired wisdom

of using SWOT analysis in practice. One should agree with the predictions regarding the practical consequences of the fierce competition in the market of hotel services: the presence of high occupancy of the hotel enterprise will increase the efficiency of tourist activity. Companies located in low-attractive resorts that are affected by reduced investment will record lower productivity and will have to adopt aggressive investment policies [7]. The lack of functions of analysis, control, reserves, guarantees, and other components of management attracts attention, which may indicate a significant burden on the owner and management.

The task of realizing Ukraine's interest in the development of high-quality hospitality infrastructure and the activation of domestic and inbound tourism is emerging. A qualitative change in the market is noted: the appearance of new groups of hotel guests: internally displaced persons, persons who have temporary work abroad, participants in the implementation of cross-border projects for the development of small and medium-sized businesses, attention is paid to small hotels, in particular, hostels, effective hotel management techniques are used, etc.

Let's continue to consider the functionality of the SWOT analysis of hotels and by superimposing the logic of the analysis of a real object in Spain on a possible object in Ukraine, let's reflect the line of SWOT analysis in the business strategy, Table 2.

**Table 1**

Consolidated information on the content of the components of the SWOT analysis business strategies of the hotel according to the authors' proposals

Strengths	Opportunities
<p>Positive market demand, growing participation of the business community, monopoly business, attractive sales points and landscapes [12], leadership in the tourism market [7], extensive experience and a wide field of business [6], diversification of tourism offer and tourism products, flexibility and adaptability to the market, good value for money [7].</p> <p>Creation of package tariffs, placement of online advertisements, provision of discounts, and promotion of ecological hotel practices [11].</p> <p>Effective customer retention schemes, improvement of services, increase of tourist loyalty to the company [6, 7], quality of staff service, standards of hygiene and sanitation [9].</p> <p>Strong real estate portfolio [6], heritage value [9], infrastructure for collaboration, appropriate superstructure to support facilities, security support [12].</p> <p>Financial resources, patents/technology, competence in organization, management, research and development [6, 7], corporate culture, proper strategic planning system [7], High level of service due to technological integration [6, 9], willingness to try new approaches [12].</p> <p>Strategic location of the hotel [7, 9, 12], the need to extend the tourist season [7], support from the religious community [12]</p>	<p>Convenient natural factors of the hotel, organization of attractive events at the beginning and end of the season [7].</p> <p>Provision of tax benefits, land concession for investors, Government measures, formation of strategic alliances, establishment of new resorts [6].</p> <p>Diversification of tariffs and tourist packages [7].</p> <p>The trend of restructuring, strengthening and expansion of tourism activities, expansion of the international market, promotion of the hotel abroad, development of regional strategies, attraction of foreign tourists by offering differentiated tourist products, completeness and quality of hotel and resort infrastructure [7].</p> <p>The possibility of doing promotions to satisfy vacationers, expansion of the area of activity [7].</p> <p>Focusing on scientific research and development, development of information technologies [6, 7, 9, 11].</p> <p>Collaboration with celebrity green installations to attract guests to the green market [11]</p>
Threats	Weakness
<p>Political instability [6, 9], dependence on the state budget [12].</p> <p>Natural disaster [12], weather events [7]. The economy affected by the pandemic [9, 11].</p> <p>Changes in the macroeconomic climate [6], unattractive to foreign investors, a small share of GDP [7].</p> <p>Motivation for travel [7, 9], decrease in the number of domestic tourists [7].</p> <p>Increasing competition, vulnerability to fluctuations in the business environment [7].</p> <p>Loss of talent and key personnel [6], influence of the attractiveness of the territory and the intensity of tourist flows [7].</p> <p>Competition environment in the hotel [9], outdated equipment, weak road infrastructure [7].</p> <p>Competitors with the same special packages [11], need to prevent crimes against tourists [12]</p>	<p>A small share of the world market [6].</p> <p>The business environment is unfriendly to foreign investors [7], lack of political will [12].</p> <p>Lack of adequate flexibility due to the large size of the objects [6], old-fashioned building architecture [9], outdated tourist facilities, inadequate infrastructure [7], lack of legal support [12].</p> <p>Lack of qualified workforce [12].</p> <p>Lack of new financing [12], high level of indebtedness [6].</p> <p>In the high season, there are significant deviations in the competitiveness and quality of tourist services, competition with other resorts and hotels, and the lack of a clear strategy [7].</p> <p>Inefficient management at all levels, presence of high costs, improper management of existing assets [7]</p>

**Note:** created by the author based on [6, 7, 9–12]

Table 2

The process of SWOT analysis in ensuring the improvement of the activity of the Costa del Sol Hotel of Ukraine at the stage of planning and implementation of the business strategy

Components of the process	The content of the procedures for justifying a strategic decision and the function of SWOT analysis
Goal	Elevation of the hotel business based on the development of hospitality technologies as part of the ABC brand hotel group, reflecting the nature of the brand: showcasing the latest trends and artistic creations on the local scene
Business strategy	The creation of an object with high historical and cultural value, the formation of a strong cultural identity of Ukraine, which will help to form powerful sites/centers of leisure, conferences and business meetings
Previous phases	
Formation of information and analytical support	Consistency, unification and integration of historical and forecast information about the internal and external sides of the business environment of the hotel, the involvement of a consulting and information agency
Discussion and evaluation of variants of SWOT-analysis factors and selection of the optimal variant	Brainstorming of the strategy by the executive team, assessment of the impact of factors, sub-factors and their combination on the project, taking into account the development of technologies, the behavior of society and the business community, familiarization with positive cases from the SWOT analysis, the involvement of professional trainers, the use of the results of business statistics, calculations of the proximity coefficient regarding the weighted value of SWOT factors and the ranking of the effectiveness of the hotel's business strategy
4 factors of SWOT analysis, Table 1 paper	
Strengths	Participation in state programs of Ukraine: rehabilitation of ATO participants, soldiers of the Armed Forces and military pensioners of Ukraine, provision of comfortable housing for temporarily displaced persons, support for war orphans, consideration of VAT benefits, total introduction of energy-saving technologies, acquisition of natural space and full realization of competitive advantages, by adhering to the standards of the ABC brand hotel group, successfully responding to the needs of new luxury travelers and increasing competitiveness in the luxury segment, enhancing the quality of the destination: a conference center and gym on the 1st floor, an outdoor heated infinity pool with a solarium, a bar and a restaurant will become the epicenter of the hotel's social life and cultural program
Opportunities	Recruitment/selection of highly qualified personnel, a chance to use rich local opportunities, to form the potential of tourism with high added value, to stimulate the demand for tourism products
Threats	Intensification of competition with other participants of the hotel market, high vulnerability of the market to the decline of tourists due to the pandemic and war, limited scope of the internal market of hotel services, significant risk of activity
Weakness	Problems with payback and efficiency make it difficult for the hotel to implement innovations, the lack of high incentives for the cost saving policy, the priority of traditional methods of evaluating the hotel's activities
Final phase: implementation of the business strategy project at the Costa del Sol hotel (Sunny Beach)	
Number of hotel rooms	128 rooms
Comfort level	4-star hotel
Start of construction	2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter 2023
Commissioning	4 <sup>th</sup> quarter 2024
Performers	Construction companies of Bulgaria, Spain, Poland, Ukraine and Finland

**Note:** created by the author according to [16]

**3.3. The information base for the justification of the business strategy based on the SWOT analysis.** Proper provision of users with data occurs through the formation of a reliable information base. The sources of historical information for the SWOT analysis are the existing hotel management information system:

- the procedure for ordering (reserving) room stock by hotel visitors (customer database), accounting and management accounting resources;
- in recent years, the Uniform System of Accounts for the Lodging Industry (USALI) has gained popularity, the hotel's income is dominated by income from accommodation of guests in rooms, provision of food and drinks (restaurant), from other managed units;
- accordingly, hotel expenses relate to maintaining comfort in rooms and providing food to restaurant visitors, administrative and general expenses, information and

telecommunications system, sales and marketing, property operation and maintenance, utilities and management fees, non-operating expenses and interest payments, depreciation/amortization, losses/profits from disposal of assets;

- on a systematic basis, internal operational reports are created, in particular, on the implementation of activity budgets (sales, resources, cash flows, investment projects, innovations, etc.);
- statistical data on hotel activity are also used, in particular, statistical reporting on form No. 1-KZR [6, 17], etc.

In addition to historical information, forecast information obtained from the involved information agencies and services on a commercial basis is formed.

The formation of data for filling the fields of the SWOT analysis matrix and their further use and interpretation takes place, which requires the classification and ranking of information according to pre-selected indicators (indicators,

parameters, benchmarks, criteria, ratings and ranks, etc.). Compilation of transition tables and the corresponding classification is envisaged and defragmentation of raw data into forms that allow operating with business strategy information that is of a service nature.

Based on the importance of information support for project analysis and implementation, it is appropriate to use an integrated (holistic, combined) approach. When integrating information systems, in general, a limited range of key provisions of the system is formed:

- management tasks (market share, portfolio of orders, retention and expansion of the circle of visitors, good management, and compliance with quality, profitability and attractiveness of the hotel);
- advertising (target direction, special promotions, events);
- clients (maintenance and expansion of the target audience through new services);
- employees (quality staff, level of training/retraining, keeping the best from leaving and attracting the best from the outside, maintaining dedication to the business, growth prospects);
- logistics and sales (techniques for placing orders, pre-orders, supply of materials, stocks, goods, guarantees);
- site (content, filling, updating, statistics of visits);
- document management (formation of primary, summary, regular, target information, reporting policy, closed mode).

The procedure (algorithm) for implementing the hotel strategy according to the modern method of SWOT analysis can have the following 3 stages:

1) preparatory stage:

- determining the purpose of the research (formation of the leading idea-hypothesis);
- conducting internal techno-, ecological-, energy-, socio-, financial audit;
- inventory of property for liabilities;
- formation of a team of performers (including persons who can and are capable of making decisions about the future fate of the project);
- formation of an information system for the process of SWOT analysis (collection and systematization of historical information, formation of forecast information);
- an objective detailed assessment of the sides of the activity, qualified as strong, weak;
- an objective assessment of the opportunity and threat of the hotel;
- the proper display of new analytical information, based on a critical study of the situation with the impact and consideration of risk;
- modeling of business strategy actions in each scenario;

2) drawing up the best version (variants) of a business strategy in the format of a SWOT analysis table (Table 1), involving consultants or coaching, conducting a «brainstorming» by a team of performers and obtaining fruitful ideas;

3) coordination of operational (tactical) and strategic decisions and selection/implementation of the final scenario of the business strategy (action plan, allocation of tasks, name of the measure, performance indicator, person responsible for performance, period of performance, expected results, and controllers) and tracking the degree of implementation/over-implementation/non-implementation of the strategy in the format of SWOT factors according to information system data (Table 2). This methodological

technique is confirmed by other researchers: SWOT analysis consists of two main stages:

- SWOT determination and strategy formulation using the SWOT matrix;
- there is an objective weighing of the factors and sub-factors of the SWOT analysis [9], the result of the SWOT analysis should be an action plan [18]. The final result of the SWOT analysis is the implementation of the hotel's business strategy, that is, the implementation of the chosen best investment project.

Ultimately, hotel services are provided to visitors, hotel products are consumed by guests, and the necessary balance in hotel operations is achieved through the use of SWOT analysis and its components, which are formalized as Strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Contribute to the achievement of the parameters of a person's comfortable stay in the hotel and, through proper management and implementation of the chosen strategy of actions in the market of hotel services, to achieve the appropriate financial condition of the hotel. Through the philosophical interpretation of initially opposing positions and directions of influence on the hotel's actions through wise perception and implementation of the optimal asset vector of a well-founded business strategy, to seek compromises and try on polar views, and then by your actions to convince the elements and achieve victory in resolving the contradictions of human existence.

SWOT analysis mobilizes internal potential and sources of information (strengths and weaknesses of the hotel), makes external forces and risks (opportunities and threats) conscious. At the same time, to optimize the work requires the formation of all aspects of the business on one information panel, which is accessible and actively used in taking real measures to manage the team of performers who were actively involved in the discussion of options.

The results of the study indicate the appropriateness of using SWOT analysis techniques in practice based on the example of Ukraine in a state of war, in particular, systematization of the conditions for analyzing business strategies, providing information, good management, algorithm of actions for the implementation of the hotel strategy, putting forward strategy alternatives, specifying criteria and critical aspects of activity. Restrictions for Ukraine are the danger to the lives of tourists, targeting domestic tourists, lack of direction for different categories of guests.

#### **4. Conclusions**

The paper notes that in view of the strategic importance of the hotel sector to ensure the country's stability, it is necessary to revive it through the business strategy of hotels at a new level. Taking into account the positive foreign experience, this is possible thanks to the comprehensive implementation of modern management methodology.

It has been shown that appropriate to substantiate the contribution of hotels to the GDP of Ukraine. And, to consider the model of situational SWOT analysis in the activity of hotels, field studies of the use of SWOT analysis in hotels are needed, critical use of functions of analysis, control, formation of reserves, guarantees, other components of hotel management, suitable adjustments should be made to the Tourism Development Strategy of Ukraine.

## Conflict of interest

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