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## A LOGISTICS-DRIVEN APPROACH TO ENSURING THE COMPETITIVENESS OF UKRAINIAN BUSINESS TOURISM

**Olga Karpun, Valeria Yakovenko.** *"A logistics-driven approach to ensuring the competitiveness of Ukrainian business tourism".* The article examines the essence of the process of organizing business trips involving air transport, which is a key component of business tourism. It is noted that this process requires a systematic logistics-driven approach to enhance the competitiveness of companies in this industry.

It was noted that, in our opinion, a logistics-driven approach to ensuring the competitiveness of business tourism lies in the implementation of the supply chain management concept, which aims at effectively serving demand and creating added value for consumers, as well as realizing a customer-centric approach in managing the activities of companies in the tourism industry.

It was also emphasized that a logistics-driven approach to ensuring the competitiveness of business tourism can be implemented at various stages of organizing business trips, thereby contributing to the achievement of overall optimization of the customer service chain. Therefore, the process of organizing business trips involving air transport was analyzed in detail, problem areas were identified at each considered stage, and solutions were proposed.

Given the high level of competition and the rapid change in market conditions, companies need to apply a logistics-driven approach to optimize business processes, enhance the efficiency of customer interaction, and improve the transportation component.

The main directions for using a logistics-driven approach to enhance the competitiveness of companies in the tourism industry were identified as the optimization of routine and time-consuming processes. It was noted that the automation of these processes using CRM systems, robotic parsers, and artificial intelligence will significantly reduce the time spent on processing requests, as well as increase the speed and accuracy of decision-making. Furthermore, the implementation of IP telephony and integrated communication channels will ensure continuous monitoring of customer interactions, which will improve the overall level of service.

*Thus, the use of a logistics-driven approach to ensuring the competitiveness of business tourism will significantly increase the efficiency of resource management, reduce costs, improve the quality of customer service, and ensure flexibility in responding to market changes.*

**Keywords:** logistics-driven approach, competitiveness, business tourism, business travel, air transport, business trips organization process, business trips optimization

**Ольга Карпунь, Валерія Яковенко. «Логістичний підхід до забезпечення конкурентоспроможності українського бізнес-туризму».** У статті розглянуто сутність процесу організації бізнес-подорожей за участю авіатранспорту, який є ключовою складовою ділового туризму. Зазначено, що даний процес потребує системного логістичного підходу для підвищення конкурентоспроможності компаній у цій галузі.

Було зазначено, що на нашу думку, логістичний підхід до забезпечення конкурентоспроможності бізнес-туризму полягає у втіленні концепції управління ланцюгами поставок, що має на меті ефективне обслуговування попиту і створення додаткової цінності для споживачів, а також реалізує клієнтоорієнтований підхід в управлінні діяльністю компаній туристичної галузі.

Також було наголошено, що логістичний підхід до забезпечення конкурентоспроможності бізнес-туризму можна впроваджувати на різних етапах організації бізнес-подорожей, сприяючи тим самим досягненню загальної оптимізації ланцюга обслуговування клієнтів. Саме тому, було детально проаналізовано процес організації бізнес-подорожей за участю авіатранспорту, визначені проблемні місця на кожному розглянутому етапі та запропоновані рішення.

Враховуючи високий рівень конкуренції та швидко змінювані ринкові умови, компаніям необхідно застосовувати логістичний підхід для оптимізації бізнес-процесів, підвищення ефективності взаємодії з клієнтами та вдосконалення транспортної складової.

Основними напрямками використання логістичного підходу для підвищення конкурентоспроможності компаній туристичної галузі були визначені оптимізація рутинних та часозатратних процесів. Було зазначено, що автоматизація цих процесів за допомогою CRM-систем, роботизованих парсерів та штучного інтелекту дозволить значно скоротити витрати часу на обробку запитів, а також підвищити швидкість і точність прийняття рішень. А впровадження IP-телефонії та інтегрованих каналів комунікації забезпечить безперервний контроль за взаємодією з клієнтами, що підвищить загальний рівень сервісу.

Таким чином, використання логістичного підходу до забезпечення конкурентоспроможності бізнес-туризму дозволить суттєво підвищити ефективність управління ресурсами, знизити витрати, покращити якість обслуговування клієнтів та забезпечити гнучкість у реагуванні на зміни ринку.

**Ключові слова:** логістичний підхід, конкурентоспроможність, бізнес-туризм, бізнес-подорожі, авіатранспорт, процес організації бізнес-подорожей, оптимізація бізнес-подорожей

**Introduction.** The development of business tourism is acquiring particular significance in the context of Ukraine's economic transformation, its European integration course, and post-crisis recovery. Business tourism acts as a powerful driver for the activation of international business interaction, the stimulation of investment, job

creation, and GDP growth. At the same time, current challenges, particularly the closure of Ukrainian airspace, the destabilization of transport and logistics infrastructure, and the reorientation towards international hubs, have significantly complicated the organization of business trips.



The situation is further complicated by increasing competition in the tourism services market, rising customer demands for the quality, speed, and personalization of service. In such circumstances, business tourism enterprises require new approaches to ensure their competitiveness. A logistics-driven approach, based on systematic flow management, process digitalization, and customer focus, is considered an effective tool for achieving this goal.

**Problem statement (formulation of research purposes).** Based on the conducted analysis of scientific literature, it was found that many researchers consider logistics as a tool for enhancing company competitiveness [3, 5, 6]. They note that "the development of logistics is primarily driven by the desire to reduce time and monetary costs associated with the movement of goods" [6]. Furthermore, "based on the logistics approach to competitiveness management, new sources of competitive advantages for the enterprise are created, which are based on low costs" [3].

It should also be noted that there is a growing interest in the application of logistics in the tourism industry [7, 12, 13, 14]. In particular, work [13] states that "the logistics approach contributes to the sustainable development of the tourism industry through the efficient use of resources, enables governing bodies to monitor the market situation, implement innovative technologies, and utilize feedback from customers." In another source, we find the assertion that "currently, traditional logistics prevails in the tourism sector of Ukraine, where many operators have only begun to form their first electronic logistics structures" [7].

However, we can argue that a comprehensive model for applying the logistics-driven approach specifically in the field of business tourism under the conditions of the transformation of Ukraine's transport system and the growth of digital competition has not yet been sufficiently developed. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention

specifically to the study of the general principles of logistics management in business tourism, the role of digital technologies in customer service logistics, and methods for improving the efficiency of business travel logistics chains.

The purpose of the article is the theoretical substantiation and development of practical recommendations for enhancing the competitiveness of business tourism based on a logistics-driven approach.

To achieve this purpose, the following tasks are set in the article:

- to investigate the specifics of logistical business processes in the field of business tourism;
- to analyze current trends influencing the competitiveness of tourism enterprises;
- to identify logistical tools that contribute to improving the efficiency of customer service;
- to propose logistical solutions for optimizing the activities of tourism companies in new market conditions.

**The main material and results of the research.** The organization of business trips involving air transport is a key component of business tourism, requiring a systematic logistics-driven approach to enhance the competitiveness of companies in this industry.

We note that, in our opinion, a logistics-driven approach to ensuring the competitiveness of business tourism lies in the implementation of the supply chain management concept, which aims at effectively serving demand and creating added value for consumers, as well as realizing a customer-centric approach in managing the activities of companies in the tourism industry [based on 4]. The logistics-driven approach, as an innovative model of development and management, can be considered an important condition for achieving the sustainable competitiveness of Ukrainian business tourism.

A logistics-driven approach to ensuring the competitiveness of business tourism can be implemented at various stages of



organizing business trips, thereby contributing to the achievement of overall optimization of the customer service chain.

The process of organizing business trips involving air transport includes several important stages, the main ones of which are presented in Fig. 1. Initially, it is necessary to analyze the client's needs, determine the purpose of the trip, budget, and deadlines. Next, the optimal route and carriers need to be selected, followed by booking airline tickets through global distribution systems (GDS) or directly through airlines. The subsequent step is the organization of related services, such as hotels, transfers, and conference rooms, as well as registration of insurance policies and visa support. The final

stage involves monitoring the trip and promptly adjusting the itinerary in case of changes.

We can assert that the competitiveness of companies in the field of business tourism largely depends on effective customer acquisition channels. The main ways to find clients currently include participation in tender procurements through platforms such as SmartTender, Prozorro, and Zakupivli.pro, as well as direct contacts, both warm and cold. Additionally, promotion through social networks, particularly Facebook and LinkedIn, is actively used, allowing for faster identification of potential clients and maintaining communication with regular partners.

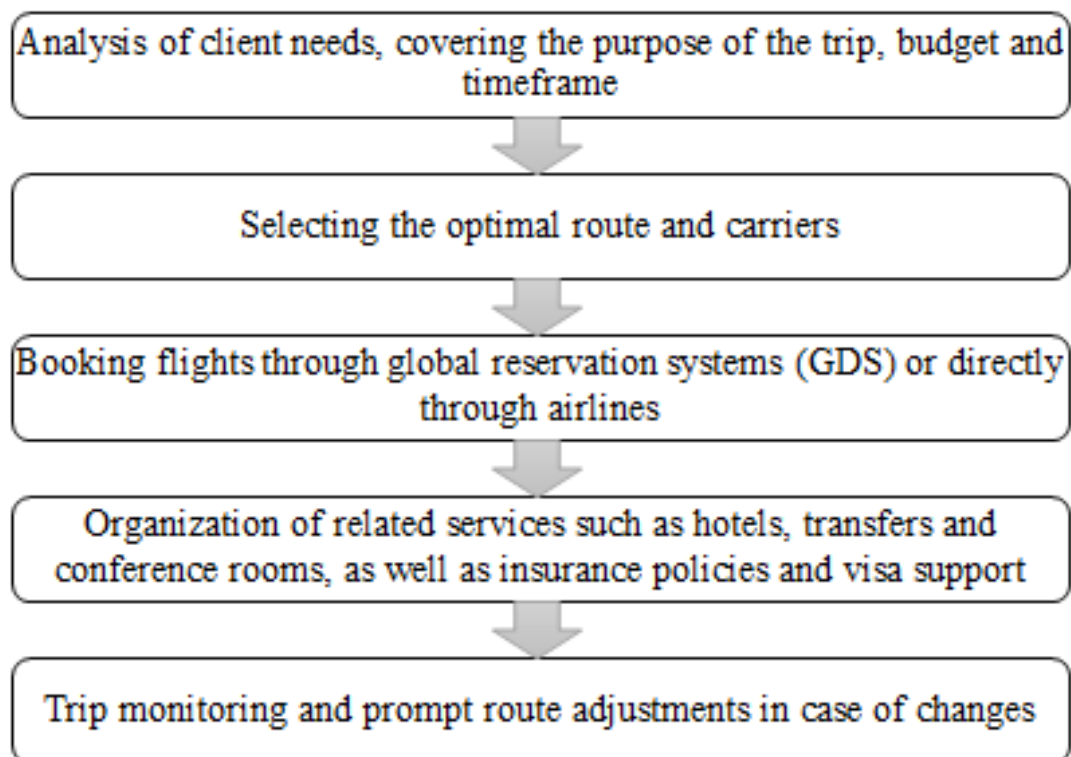


Figure 1 – The process of organizing business trips involving air transport

During the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the structure and routes of air transportation underwent significant changes. The main departure points for Ukrainian business tourists shifted to European hubs. Experts in the business tourism industry note that Warsaw has become the most popular departure city, accounting for approximately

70% of flights, while 20% of flights originate from Chisinau, and the remaining 10% from other European cities such as Budapest and Vienna. The majority of travel requests (around 70%) concern European destinations, which is explained by convenient connections and affordable ticket prices.

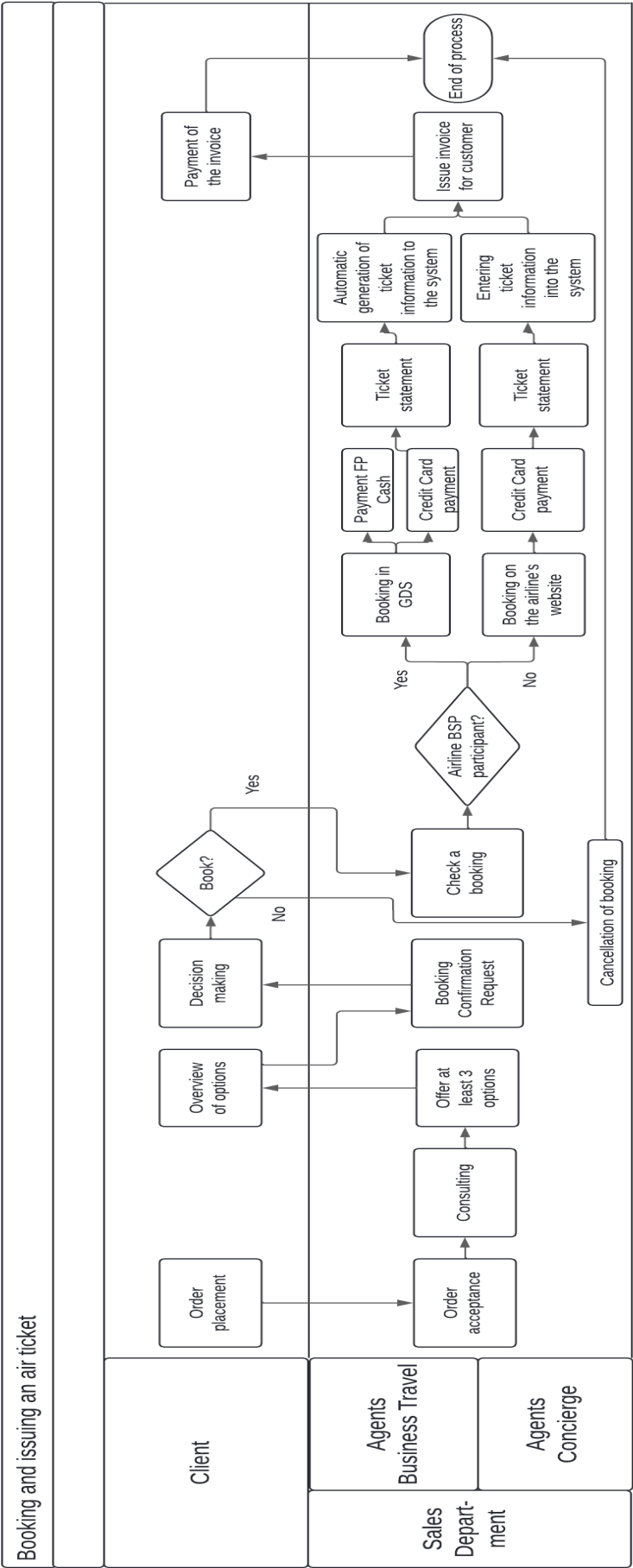


Figure 2 – Business process chain for booking and issuing an airline

At the same time, air travel within Europe accounts for approximately 60% of the industry's revenue due to the significantly higher cost of flights to the USA and Asia.

To ensure high-quality service for business tourists, travel companies actively interact with airlines, transport companies, hotels, transfer companies, and conference centers. Cooperation with many tourism service providers (airlines, transport companies, hotels, transfer companies, conference centers, etc.) allows for finding the optimal option that meets the client's requirements and capabilities, and sometimes even exceeds their expectations. Accreditation from IATA (International Air Transport Association) is a significant competitive advantage, as it allows for making bookings through GDS, working with a wide range of air carriers, receiving special conditions from airlines, and increasing customer trust.

The choice of airline for a business trip depends on the route, budget, and level of comfort. The most popular air carriers for business tourists currently include Turkish Airlines, Lufthansa, Air France KLM, and LOT Polish Airlines [11]. The selection of a specific carrier is often determined by the client's needs, which may include the necessity of connections, the level of comfort during the flight, or other additional requirements.

A typical business process for organizing air transportation (Fig. 2) begins with the client placing an order, which can be done via email, messengers, or phone. Next, consultation on flight options takes place, after which the client is offered several alternatives with different connections, airlines, and schedules. After selecting the

optimal option, a booking is made in the system, for example, through Amadeus or another GDS. The next stage is determining the payment method, which can be via financial transfer or credit card. After this, an electronic ticket is issued and sent to the client, and at the final stage, an invoice for the services provided is generated.

For the effective operation of companies in the business tourism industry, various information support systems are used. These include booking systems such as Amadeus, TravelPoint, and Galileo, which allow for efficient handling of tickets and routing. In addition, specialized databases for the visa department are used, simplifying document processing, as well as access to confidential airline fares. The use of online booking, Google services, and specialized modules for hotel reservations enables the provision of comprehensive service to clients.

In the field of business travel organization, the BSP (Billing and Settlement Plan) system plays an important role, consolidating information and cash flows between agents and airlines. BSP is a central point through which data and funds flow between travel agents and airlines [1]. Instead of each agent having individual relationships with each airline, all information is consolidated through BSP. It allows for a single payment covering sales for all airlines, ensuring a high level of timely settlements. In addition, BSP provides reporting and settlement obligations (RHC) for making payments, which increases the financial efficiency of companies in the business tourism sector.

The main advantages of BSP are presented in Fig. 3.

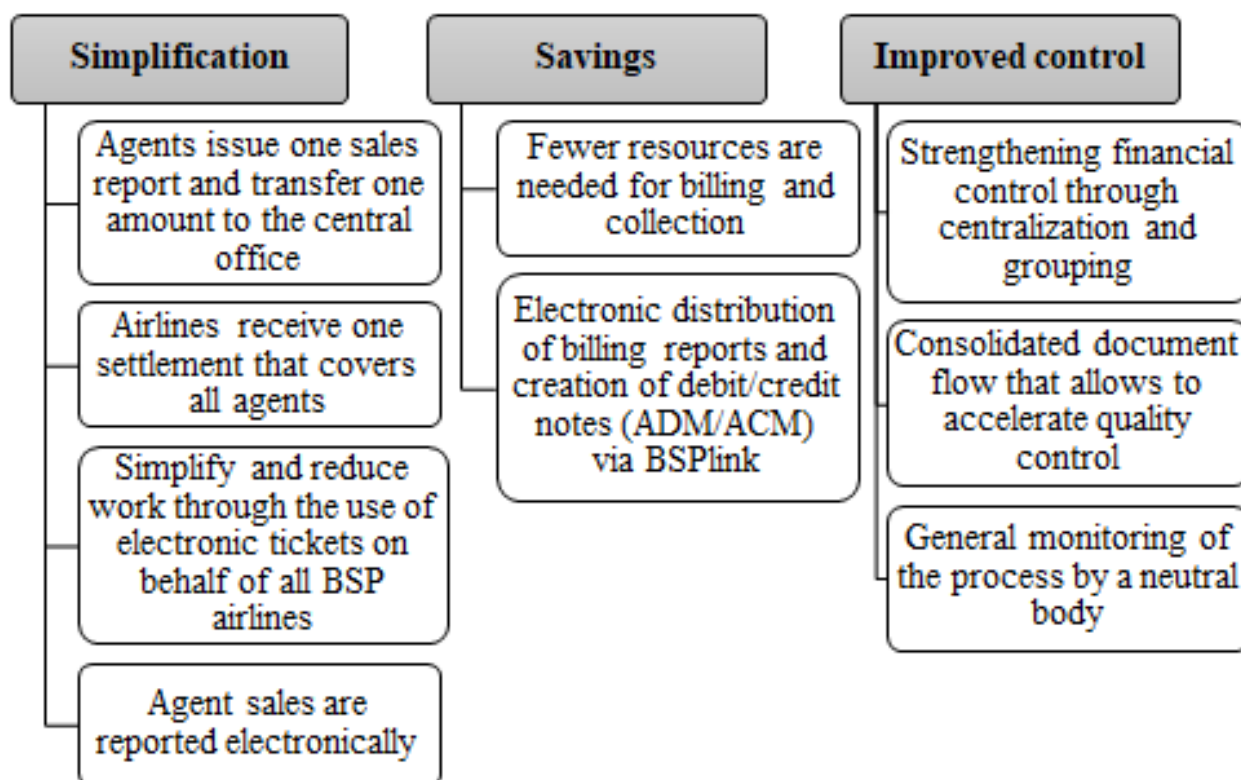


Figure 3 – Benefits of using Billing and Settlement Plan (BSP)

*Source: compiled by the authors based on [1]*

In the process of organizing business trips involving air transport, companies face both opportunities and threats that affect the competitiveness of the entire sector. A SWOT analysis of the business tourism industry allows for the assessment of these aspects and the identification of strategic directions for development.

The strengths of companies operating in the field of business tourism include a customer-oriented approach, which encompasses 24/7 customer support, high labor productivity, team cohesion, and a developed corporate culture. Important competitive advantages are participation in international business associations and a developed partnership system with key players in the logistics chain, including airlines, hotels, and transport carriers.

However, the industry also has weaknesses, among which is complex multi-channel communication with clients, involving phone calls, messages in messengers, and email. This complicates the speed of processing requests and can lead to

the loss of some information during the transfer of a client to another agent. Irregular working hours, requiring availability on weekends, as well as agent burnout, create additional challenges for companies.

The development of technology opens up significant opportunities for improving business processes in the field of business tourism. The use of cryptocurrencies in settlements can simplify payments and minimize dependence on banking restrictions. The integration of NDC (New Distribution Capability) content allows for access to more favorable fares and special offers from airlines [2].

Despite the prospects for development, the business tourism industry faces serious threats. The reluctance of some airlines to work with Ukrainian agents limits the possibilities for booking airline tickets and obtaining exclusive fares. Strict banking regulation of international operations creates additional difficulties in conducting business, especially when making payments abroad.

The technological aspect remains another bottleneck for the industry. Despite the widespread use of booking systems and a management system, the lack of full integration between them leads to duplication of information, manual data entry, and increased risks of errors. The absence of an automated process for generating personalized offers based on customer interaction history limits the possibilities for improving service and operational efficiency. In addition, insufficient integration between marketing and logistics processes complicates effective demand and resource management.

Given the high level of competition and the rapid change in market conditions, companies need to apply a logistics-driven approach to optimize business processes, enhance the efficiency of customer interaction, and improve the transportation component.

Recommendations for enhancing the competitiveness of business tourism based on a logistics-driven approach are based on a comprehensive analysis of existing processes and the search for ways to optimize them.

The main directions for using a logistics-driven approach to enhance the competitiveness of companies in the tourism industry are the optimization of routine and time-consuming processes.

The automation of these processes using CRM systems, robotic parsers, and artificial intelligence will significantly reduce the time spent on processing requests, as well as increase the speed and accuracy of decision-making. The implementation of IP telephony and integrated communication channels will ensure continuous monitoring of customer interactions, which will improve the level of service.

Particular attention should be paid to the transportation component of the industry. The high volatility of airline, railway, and road transportation can cause delays and additional costs for business tourists. The application of demand forecasting algorithms and route optimization will allow companies

to proactively book the most advantageous transportation options, minimizing delays and inefficient expenses. In addition, the implementation of blockchain technologies in the booking system will improve the transparency of operations, speed up payment confirmations, and reduce the likelihood of fraudulent schemes.

Communication with customers involves the use of all interaction channels. Therefore, one way to increase competitiveness is the implementation of a unified communication system. Such systems allow for the automation of the process of designing various services for different clients, which not only saves time and effort at the management level but also increases the accuracy of data collection on each client, their preferences, and requirements [15].

An example of such a system is KeyCRM – a Ukrainian CRM for built-in integration with Instagram, Viber, Telegram, Facebook, and Email. As a communication platform, KeyCRM:

- gathers all requests from all accounts in a single window.
- allows for processing correspondence without leaving the dashboard: conducting dialogues, processing applications, creating Customer cards, sending any files: photos and images, videos, emojis, and communicating via voice messages.
- displays overall statistics on chats: their number per week, day, month; average response speed. Detailed statistics are available in the form of diagrams and tables and can be filtered by periods.
- creates a truly user-friendly interaction system thanks to its ability to "recognize" a person and store important notes: birthday, preferences, etc. [10].

The activities of employees when booking in GDS involve providing several options for the client. Information from the global distribution system must be presented to the client in an understandable form. To optimize this process, the use of the Aviato.me service, which is free, can be proposed. The workflow with the proposed service is shown in Fig. 4.

A significant problem for the solution of which a logistics-driven approach can be used is the manual entry of information for some bookings into management accounting systems, which requires additional time. The need for manual input exists for booking tickets of low-cost airlines such as Wizz Air, Ryanair, easyJet, etc. A low-cost airline is an airline that provides air passenger transportation services at prices relatively lower than traditional airlines, in exchange for waiving most traditional passenger services.

The solution to minimize this "bottleneck" is the implementation of RPA (Robotic Process Automation). RPA is the robotization of routine processes. The main stages of the operation of such a parsing robot are shown in Fig. 5.

Robotic systems will be used to automate the processes of booking airline tickets. The use of robotic systems will reduce the amount of time and errors, which, in turn, increases safety and reduces the risks of problems [4, 8].

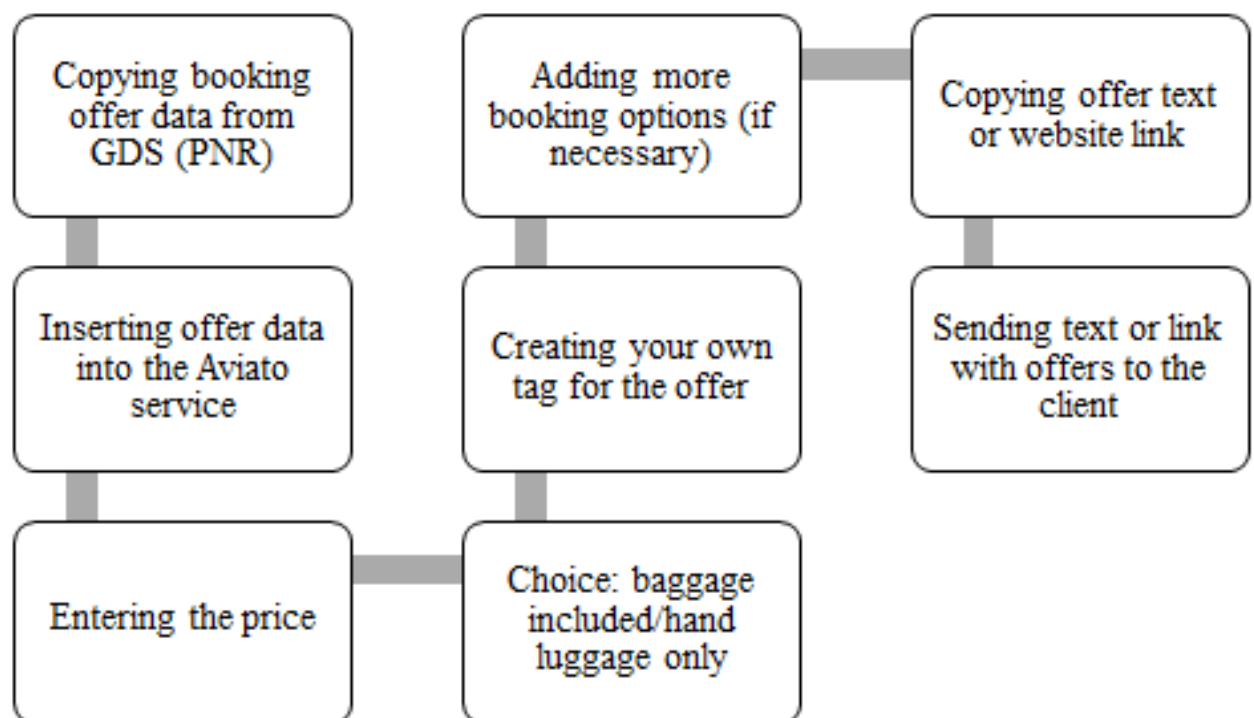


Figure 4 – Stages of optimizing the presentation of offers from GDS to the client

When the robot receives an email with an airline ticket, with the help of correctly configured algorithms, the main data from the ticket is transferred to a fixed data structure. After that, the integration of structured information into the management system will take place. The robot must be configured for different airlines, as each of them formats airline tickets differently.

For the development of companies in the tourism industry, the use of artificial intelligence (AI) is necessary. There are many types and areas of AI application. The use of

artificial intelligence reduces the number of human errors and increases the efficiency of logistics processes, which ensures safety and reduces the risks of problems [4].

The logistics-driven approach in this case involves optimizing the search for airline tickets using AI Copilot from DRCT. DRCT strives to improve the distribution process for airlines and customize ticket sales for agencies. AI Copilot is designed to optimize and customize the booking and post-booking process.



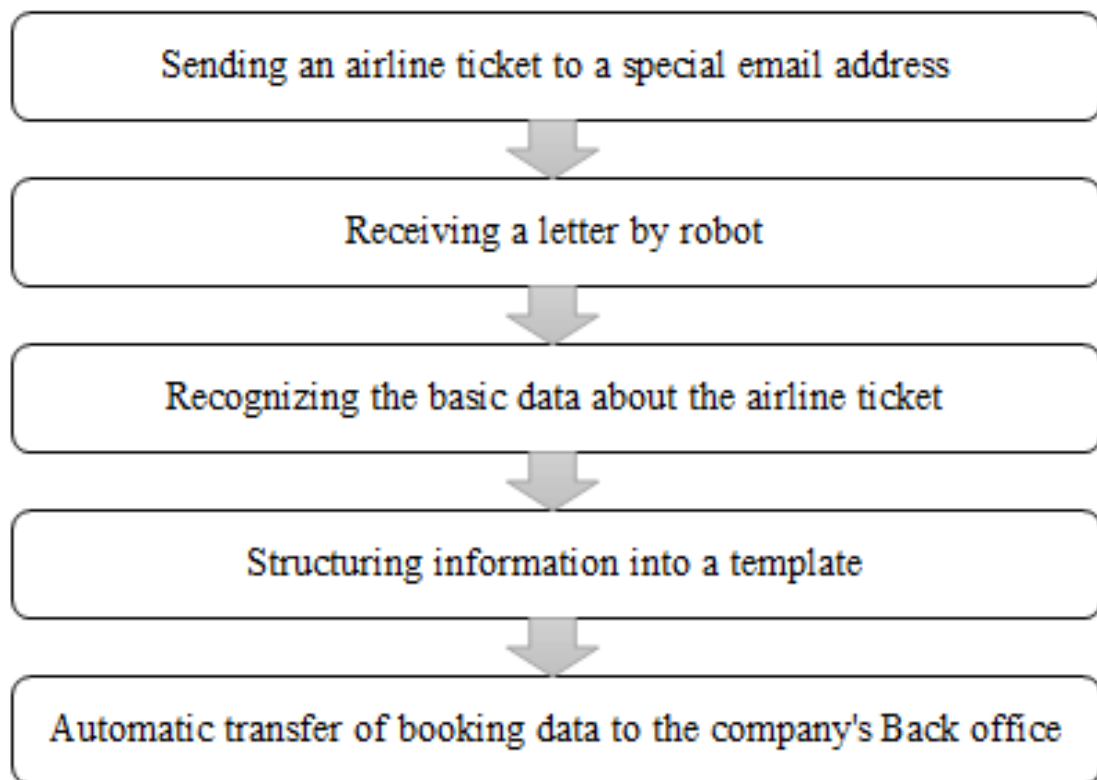


Figure 5 – Scheme of automating the entry of booking information into the management system using RPA

Artificial intelligence uses large language models, machine learning, and the experience of developers in this field to provide significant industry value. Fig. 6 shows an example of the AI Copilot's response to a user's service request. Instead of the usual interface, which includes dozens of filters for complex queries, conversational search reduces it to just a couple of lines of text. This AI can be used both online and in the application on any device. A feature of this service is the submission of a request in free form.

AI will reduce the time spent searching for favorable offers for clients according to the specifics of their requests [9].

The DRCT application allows you to search for flights and create bookings via NDC without leaving the GDS. NDC (New Distribution Capability) is a data exchange

format based on offer and order management processes for creating and distributing relevant offers to customers regardless of the distribution channel. The NDC standard expands communication capabilities between airlines and travel agents and is open for implementation and use by any third party, intermediary, IT provider, or non-IATA member [2]. NDC allows data to be transmitted directly from air carriers to agents, bypassing intermediaries such as GDS. It provides access to the full content of the airline – fares and additional services.

DRCT has also created an application that enables the optimization of the activities of companies in the tourism industry when booking in the global distribution system.

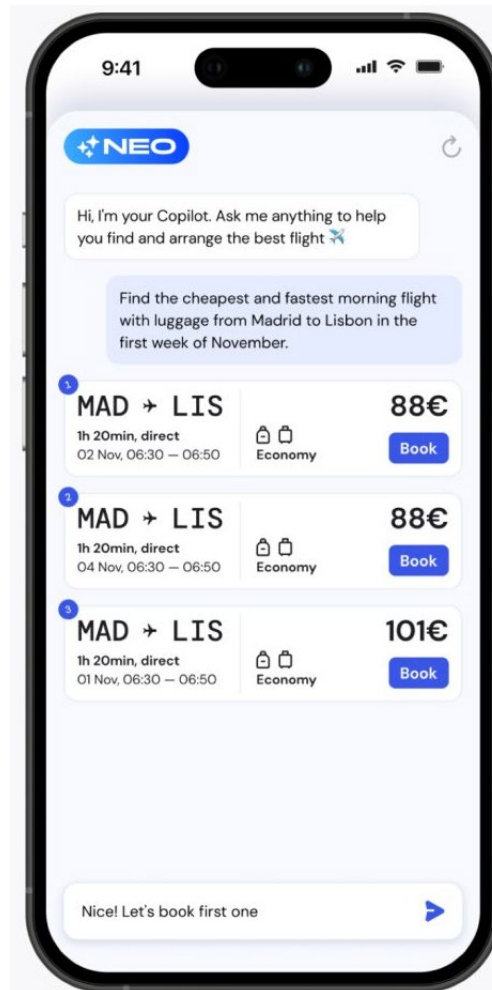


Figure 6 – Example of using AI Copilot from DRCT [4]

Currently, the following are available for booking: Aegean Airlines, airBaltic, American Airlines, British Airways, Brussels Airlines, Emirates, flydubai, Iberia, LOT, Lufthansa, SWISS, TAP, United Airlines, and more than 30 other airlines.

The service provides full access to booking: the booking itself, entering additional data without leaving the GDS. The agent is also provided with information on flight delays. The service allows for the exchange, refund, or issuance of tickets independently or through 24/7 support. Current agreements with airlines are used, and payments are made through BSP.

Thus, the implementation of a logistics-driven approach in the management of air transport enterprises and business tourism enterprises, as an innovative model of development and management is a key condition for achieving their sustainable

competitiveness in the market [4]. The use of a logistics-driven approach significantly increases the efficiency of resource management, reduces costs, improves the quality of customer service, and ensures flexibility in responding to market changes.

**Conclusions.** The organization of business trips involving air transport constitutes one of the key components of the business tourism system and requires comprehensive logistical support to achieve high competitiveness of enterprises in the industry. In the context of the transformation of the international transport environment caused by hostilities in Ukraine, there is a reorientation of routes to European air hubs, which necessitates the adaptation of business models of tourism companies to new spatial and logistical conditions.

Promising opportunities for the development of the industry have been

identified, including technological integration with global distribution systems, the introduction of new payment formats, and the automation of operations.

A logistics-driven approach, focused on the effective management of information, material, and financial flows, creates opportunities for optimizing the operational activities of tourism companies. The use of CRM systems (in particular KeyCRM) contributes to the centralization and standardization of customer interaction, the use of GDS-based tools (Aviato.me) allows for improving the presentation of offers, and the implementation of RPA solutions automates

routine tasks of processing booking data. The integration of intelligent systems such as AI Copilot provides more flexible booking management via NDC and significantly expands access to airline content.

As a result of the formation of a logistics-oriented business model, not only is the level of service improved, but the competitive positions of tour operators in a turbulent environment are also strengthened. The logistics-driven approach acts not only as a tool for improving internal business processes but also as a factor of strategic adaptability and long-term viability of companies in the business tourism industry.

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