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Conceptual approaches to the essence and typology of business models in tourism

Abstract
Object: defining the essence and main types of business models in tourism, identifying their structural elements.

Methods: for achieving the goal of the research general scientific methods were applied, in particular the method of content analysis, which made it possible to identify the main scientific research related to the study of business models in the field of tourism and hospitality; the method of a systematic approach, which made it possible to identify the main types of business models in tourism, to reveal the integrity of the models; the structural-functional method, with the help of which the structure of the studied business models was highlighted, the set of stable relations and relationships between their elements and their functions relative to each other is reflected; a generalization method aimed at establishing the existing relationships between the considered economic objects and phenomena; the method of graphic interpretation made it possible to visually present the developed business models used by tourist companies.

Results: the article reveals the conceptual approaches to the essence of business models in tourism, carried out a content analysis of the definitions of a business model, based on which the author's definition of this category is given. The basic components and system characteristics of the business model are identified. The main types of business models used by travel companies have been developed and clearly presented, in particular a customization model, a «virtual system» model, a «franchise» model, and an innovative business model. The criteria and factors of classification types are systematized, including digitalization, innovation, customer and resource orientation.

Conclusions: the results of the research made it possible to deepen the theory of entrepreneurial activity in tourism, expand the conceptual apparatus of the essence and typology of business models in tourism.

Keywords: business model, typology of business models in tourism, customization model, «virtual tourist platform» model, «franchise» model, innovative business model, entrepreneurial activity in tourism.

Introduction
Tourist activities are most sensitive to environmental influences. Among the many factors influencing the entrepreneurial activity, it should be noted the presence or absence of natural resources, the complexity of the tourism market, the limited factors of production of tourism products and services, seasonality and many others.

The COVID-19 pandemic, which arose in 2020 and paralyzed all world tourism, had tangible damage to entrepreneurial activity in tourism not only in our country but all over the world.

The OECD report «Restoring Tourism for the Future» notes that by the end of 2020, the international tourism economy contracted by about 80 %, the drop in export revenues from international tourism amounted to USD 730 billion compared to 2019†.

In Kazakhstan, the tourism industry also showed a decline. The number of tourists who visited the country in 2020 decreased by almost by 4 times and amounted to about 2 million people, with the flow of outbound and domestic tourists by 3 times compared to 2019‡.

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†https://www.vedomosti.ru/partner/articles/2020/12/20/851707-antivirus-puteshestvii
In order to restore the tourism industry in Kazakhstan as soon as possible and increase its investment potential for the long term (until 2025) the state has developed additional measures to stimulate entrepreneurs in this area: reimbursement of the costs of private business in the construction of tourist facilities and roadside service facilities: up to 10 % of the investment amount; reimbursement of 25 % of the cost of purchasing ski equipment and tourist class vehicles; subsidizing the costs of tour operators for each foreign tourist in the amount of 15,000 tenge; 100 % reimbursement of carriage charges for children on domestic routes; subsidizing the costs of maintaining sanitary facilities in the amount of 83,300 tenge.

However, despite the massive decline in the industry, COVID-19 has proven to be an unexpected catalyst for innovation and the integration of new technologies into the industry. According to OECD experts, the pandemic of the new coronavirus and the strict anti-epidemic measures introduced by various countries have accelerated the transformation of world tourism. New innovative business models, digital startups are entering the market, new opportunities for individual tours are emerging, and the role of safety and health is being rethought.

Consequently, entrepreneurial activity in tourism causes the need for its deep scientific study, disclosure of the essence of the laws of development, and finding its main trends. It is especially necessary to focus on the study of emerging new types of business models in tourism that contributes to the development of entrepreneurship in tourism, making it possible to meet the diverse needs of tourists.

**Literature Review**

In recent years, the interest of scientific circles and practitioners in innovative business models has significantly increased, in particular, the works of the following foreign and Kazakh scientists deserve attention: Zhao W., Yang T., Hughes K.D., Li Y., Clauss T., Abebe M., Tangpong C., Hock M., Zhao J., Wei Z., Yang D., Pearse N.J., Peterlin J., Ayaganova M., Pritvorova, T., Mamrayeva D., Tashenova L. (Zhao W. et al., 2021; Clauss et al., 2021; Zhao J. et al., 2021; Pearse et al., 2019; Ayaganova et al., 2019); conceptual innovative business models in tourism and hospitality are explored by Galeone A., Sebastiani R., Seo K., Woo L., Mun S.G., Soh J., Stornelli A., Ozcan S., Simms C., Fang Y., Bi D., Chen H., Peng T., Magdalina A., Bouzaima M., Mhlanga O., Zontek Z., Reinhold S., Zach F.J., Krizaj D. (Galeone et al., 2021; Seo et al., 2021; Stornelli et al., 2021; Fang et al., 2021; Magdalina et al., 2021; Mhlanga, 2019; Zontek, 2015; Reinhold et al., 2019).

A large number of works is devoted not only to the research of business models, but also to their correspondence to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the dominant types of unsustainable business models and potential solutions for sustainable business models in key sectors of the tourism industry are examined (Bocken et al., 2021; Vásquez et al., 2021). For example, Bocken N.M.P., Short S.W. There are nine dominant archetypes of unsustainable business models: exploitation of natural resources and waste; using of human resources and waste; economic using; unhealthy or erratic sentence; «quantity is more important than quality and value»; addictive consumption pattern; complex opaque global value chain; short-term shareholder; financing and supporting unsustainable practices.

Linton G., Oberg C. are engaged in the development of a typology of a business model in tourism (Linton et al., 2020). In their work, they identified 4 archetypes: bricks and mortar business models, digitalized destinations, create-a-destination and intermediary business models.

The role of social innovation in tourism is disclosed in the article by Alkier R., Milojica V., Roblek V., where they substantiate the effectiveness of social innovation in the implementation of innovative business models in tourism (Alkier et al., 2017).

A conceptual business model for managing small businesses in tourism and hospitality, where the dominant role is played by communication policy, was proposed in the research by Pham L.D.Q., Coles T., Ritchie B.W., Wang J. (Pham et al., 2021). In their opinion, effective management of social networks allows small businesses in the tourism industry to increase resilience to external shocks, natural disasters and crises. Also, the importance of social media marketing in the management of business models in tourism is emphasized by Jiaqi Y., Teo B.S.-X., Tingting L., Jiaxun Z. (Jiaqi et al., 2021).

The main directions and drivers of digitalization in the tourism business are studied by Harting R.C, Reichstein C., Haarhoff R., Hartle N., Steifl J., Kazandzhieva V., Santana H., Marx S. (Harting et al., 2019; Kazandzhieva et al., 2019; Marx, 2019). Today, blockchain technologies are receiving attention in tourism, as digitalization processes in the tourism sector are changing traditional business models.

New technologies that are now being created allow the tourist (consumer) to work directly with the manufacturer of the tourist service, which contributes to providing the consumer with a higher quality and inexpensive product, increasing the responsibility of the manufacturer of the product.

The article by Aghaei H., Naderibeni N., Karimi A. shows the advantages of using a blockchain platform in tourism, including automation and simplification of financial transactions, transparency of the transaction and reduction of paperwork; reducing the cost of a tourist product and improving the quality of services provided; reducing the cost of foreign exchange transactions; automation of personal identification processes, automated company verification and many others (Aghaei et al., 2021). Arbatskaya E., Khoreva L., in their article emphasize the importance of blockchain as an innovative achievement of digitalization in ecotourism logistics (Arbatskaya et al., 2021).

Methods
To achieve the goal of the research, the following general scientific methods were applied:

- the method of content analysis, which made it possible to identify and summarize the main scientific research related to the research of business models in the field of tourism and hospitality; based on the analysis of published sources presented in the international scientometric databases Scopus, Clarivate Analytics, RSCI, the depth of study of the concepts of «business model», «business model in tourism», «typology of business models», as well as the geography of research of the scientific problems was identified;
- the method of a systematic approach, which made it possible to identify the main types of business models used by entrepreneurs in the tourism sector, to reveal the integrity of these models;
- the structural and functional method, with the help of which the structure of the studied business models were highlighted, the set of stable relations and relationships between their elements and their functions relative to each other is reflected;
- the method of generalization aimed at establishing the existing relationships between the considered economic objects and phenomena;
- the method of graphic interpretation made it possible to visually present the developed business models used by tourist companies to reveal the relationship between its elements.

Results
Questions concerning the research of the essence and typology of business models, including those used in tourism, as the study of the sources presented in the literature review shows, are relevant and undoubtedly have the scientific interest.

It should also be noted that the article analyzed published materials on the scientometric databases Scopus (sciencedirect.com), Clarivate Analytics (webofknowledge.com), RSCI (elibrary.ru); the sample was carried out according to the search «masks»:

- in Russian-language databases «business models», «business models in tourism» made up more than 85,000 scientific papers; coverage period — 3 years (2019–2021).

Table 1 provides a summary of queries against the Clarivate Analytics database as an example. So, when studying the search queries «business models», «business models in tourism», articles of the «Early Access» type were not taken into account, since they appear in the database until the final collection of the conference/magazine issue book is finalized.
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*All types of publications are reflected, except for «Early Access»

**All types of publications are reflected, except for «Editorial Materials», «Corrections»
Working with the query «typology of business models», this type of publication was included in the analysis, which largely allowed us to consider trends in the typology of existing and new business models, but such types of materials as «Editorial Materials» and «Corrections» were not considered.

In general, the research showed that the analyzed queries are distributed within the following scientific areas (Web of Science Categories):

- «business models»: Management, Business, Economics, Environmental Sciences, Computer Sciences, Information Systems;
- «business models in tourism»: Hospitality Leisure Sport Tourism, Management, Environmental Sciences, Business, Environmental Studies;

The total number of published works on the analyzed issues for the period 2019–2021 (including Early Access Articles) is 86,942, of which about 0.5 % were visited by aspects related to the typology of business models, while about 4.2 % of scientific articles reflect the specifics of the work of the tourism business itself: for example, 1475 (40.2 %) publications belong to the section «Hospitality Leisure Sport Tourism», which once again confirms the relevance of the scientific direction considered in the article.

Among the countries, the leaders in terms of the number of works in the framework of the scientific problems under consideration (in the structure of all queries) are People's Republic of China, England, USA, Australia, Spain, and Germany. Speaking about the TOP-5 universities and scientific organizations that publish works in areas related to the assessment of business models, their classification, using in tourism, the leaders are:

- in the direction of «business models in tourism»: 1. Hong Kong Polytechnic University; 2. State University System of Florida; 3. Sun-Yat Sen University; 4. Griffith University; 5. Sejong University;


In general, a comprehensive research has allowed to offer the author's interpretation of the economic category of «business model»: «a kind of a conceptual diagram describing the structure, features and elements of doing business in the framework of a dedicated enterprise/integrated structure, as well as reflecting the specifics of its marketing, communications, industrial, logistic, financial and other types of activity».

In addition, the following classification features were identified in terms of systematizing approaches to determine the essence of a business model: from the point of view of applicability (area of using/industry), from the point of view of the nature of the resources used, from the point of view of consumer orientation and the using of communication means of interaction with internal and external environment, as well as from the standpoint of focusing on the result (income) and the ways of obtaining it.

Based on the identified classification features, the following approaches were identified in determining the nature of the business model:

1. resource based on understanding the role of resources in the production process, the nature of their using and optimal distribution;
2. effective, which determines the best ways of making a profit by the enterprise on the basis of a rational combination of available resources, as well as through the analysis of the allocated potential that determines the capabilities of the enterprise;
3. optimization, which consists in choosing the optimal combinations of the required number of resources and capabilities of the enterprise to achieve maximum efficiency in the structure of the considered business processes;
4. costly, providing for a situation when the company incurs significant costs in the case of active investment activities with a focus on obtaining a high rate of return in the future, or when the company incurs losses as it tries to gain a foothold in the market.

The main components of business models have been identified, which are conventionally divided into 4 groups:
1. organizational nature: the organizational structure of the enterprise and its key elements, strategic imperatives, the mechanism for making a profit, etc.;
2. production nature: resources, production process, value chain, etc.;
3. marketing character: consumers, competitors, suppliers, value proposition, elements of the external and internal environment of the enterprise in general; marketing communication; competitive strategy, etc.;
4. innovative character: an organizational and economic mechanism for managing the innovative potential of the enterprise; high-tech products with significant competitive advantages that can be immediately commercialized or presented to the market; available commercialization mechanisms, etc.

The system characteristics of business models have been identified and studied, such as:
- adaptability — the ability to adapt to the constantly changing conditions of the external environment of the enterprise; to neutralize the negative impact of force majeure circumstances by restructuring the components of the model;
- complexity — the work of the model as a single whole, where all the components are linked together into a single system;
- structuredness — the presence of components in the business model, each of which ensures the effective functioning of its block, which is a part of a single system;
- discreteness/continuity (depending on the nature and characteristics of the enterprise) — the ability of the system to take into account the changing/constant factors of the external and internal environment;
- objectivity — the presence of a body of knowledge about the model itself as a system; independence of functioning from the will and desire of a person;
- variability — the ability to transform (with the inclusion of additional components) depending on changing economic conditions and market requirements.

The research also made it possible to determine the types of business models used in the tourism industry in the context of modern economic development and widespread digitalization:

1. Model of customization, that is, a comprehensive focus on the desires and needs of the client in the formation/promotion of a tourist product/service. The conceptual scheme of this business model is shown in Figure 1. It shows the relationship between key market participants in terms of the development and final consumption of a tourism product. Thus, a tour operator as a company that creates a tourist product (usually of a mass nature) offers it to the market. At the same time, it can sell it directly to the buyer and to intermediaries, i.e., are travel agents. The second form of distribution in the Kazakhstan market occurs in more than 90% of cases, therefore it is precisely this form that is considered within the framework of this conceptual scheme. Further, the form of communication with the end consumer can take place both offline and online. In the first case, the client comes to a travel agency, selects the services they need where together with the manager.

In turn, the employee can work with the previously preset settings of the digital platform, through which the selection of services of interest to the client takes place, or contact the relevant suppliers directly and agree on the possibility of providing certain services on certain dates. Then they form the final package of documents and provide information support (if necessary). In the second case, the client themselves, using a specially created website/application/chatbot (a single digital platform), can select a tour, bypassing intermediaries (travel agency employees). At the same time, the consumer can view in detail each of the components of the tourist product, adding or removing services they do not need. It is important to note that in the case of such communication, the buyer can use a digital service from different devices: from a personal computer, tablet, smartphone. As a rule, many companies, working in the framework of providing customized travel services online, have adapted applications developed for iOS and Android, presented in the AppStore, PlayMarket, AppGallery (HUAWEI).
Conceptual approaches to the essence and typology of business models in tourism

Figure 1. Conceptual scheme of a customized business model used in tourism

Note — created by the authors.

Such a business model (Figure 1), on the one hand, requires additional investments at the first stages to pay employees specializing in the selection of customized travel products (for the offline option), as well as to create digital platforms, but, on the other hand, ensures full satisfaction of consumer needs, stable demand, which, in turn, allows expanding sales, improving the company’s image and positioning itself as a company operating in a «unique» segment, and also makes it possible to implement the process associated with autonomous distribution of services and reduce operating costs through the work of a single digital platform and its component, ensuring effective communication between all participants.

2. Virtual system: based on the type of «online store of tours» (marketplaces), it is the most relevant for travel agencies; travel operators, other companies providing basic and additional services, however, build their business model within the framework of the functioning of digital platforms that allow them to communicate more effectively with all market participants both in the process of creating and in the process of subsequent promotion of ready-made tourism products and services (Figure 2).

Figure 2. The structure of the business model «virtual tourism platform»

Note: created by the authors.
The figure shows that companies can offer their services both through unified digital services represented by the official websites of travel agencies and operators, global booking and reservation services (GDS), accumulating representatives of transport companies on their platforms, accommodation and catering facilities, as well as the sphere the entertainment industry and the provision of excursion services, as well as specialized online services for booking and purchasing tickets for various types of transport (airastana.com (National air carrier «Air Astana»), aviai.kz, aviasales.ru, bilet.railways.kz (KTZ), rzd.ru (Russian Railways), raileurope.com, directferries.ru (booking tickets for ships and ferries), etc.; booking rooms in hotels and other places of accommodation (booking.com, airbnb.com, apartamenty.kz, hotel.nl (booking boatels in Amsterdam), etc.; booking transport (mainly bicycles and cars) rentalcars.com, bikerentalmanager.com, cycling-rentals.com, bimbimbikes.com, li.me, bird.co (electric scooters), etc.; buying tickets for various events: bileter.ru, ticketmaster.com, footballticketnet.com, afisha.yandex.ru, ticketon.kz, etc.; for ordering and delivery of food: chocofood.kz, kura.kz, Glovo, Yandex.Food, Delivery Club, Uber Eats and many others; for the provision of public services: egov.kz, gosuslugi.ru, visa.vfsglobal.com, etc). In this case the service itself can be received by end-consumers both immediately after paying for it or be booked with subsequent payment on the spot (receipt) or prepayment (usually in the form of a small reserve amount, «frozen» on the card).

It is important to note that this form of business organization is convenient for both companies providing services and customers, as it allows them to offer a wide range of services within different price categories, promptly accept and make payments through a variety of online services, provide feedback and, thereby, to monitor the quality and timeliness of services more effectively.

It should also be noted that both specialized and unified digital services can function as unified mix systems, including and mediating communication with clients using chatbots, pages on social networks, etc.

3. The franchise is mainly typical for large travel operators that open their offices abroad (Figure 3). This business model is quite widespread in the USA and Europe.

![Figure 3. Conditional structural scheme of the business model «franchise» used in tourism](Note: created by the authors.)

As examples, Cruise Planners, an American Express Travel Representative (planning and purchasing products in the cruise tourism industry), Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park (TM) Camp Resorts (currently operating more than 75 campsites in the USA and Canada under the franchise), Dream Vacations (a service for the provision of various tourist services around the world), easyHotel (opening of «super budget» hotels; more than 41 hotels have been opened to date), faveHotel (a network of budget hotels, mainly located on the islands), Renue — Hotel Cleaning Franchise (a network of companies providing services in the field of hotel cleaning), the Canadian Tourism & Hospitality Institute (an organization that gives the opportunity to purchase a franchise to open a university that provides educational services in the field of tourism, restaurant and hospitality) can be represented.

4. Innovative business model: companies are focused solely on creating unique offers in the field of domestic, inbound and outbound tourism. As a rule, it combines the characteristics of 1–3 business models, and has a pronounced innovative component, which may have a certain character and specificity depending on the development of technology, fashion, etc.
Among the criteria and factors that made it possible to identify and systematize certain types of business models, the following were identified:

1. Digitalization (digital transformation of business processes) allows us to identify and delineate the business models used by travel companies in terms of the nature of the information technologies they use;
2. Innovativeness: focuses on the creation of new goods and services in the field of tourism, as well as on the possibility of introducing and using marketing and process innovations by companies in the framework of their activities;
3. Customer focus, which involves the creation of customized products, the development of unique offers, the formation and implementation of complex marketing programs, including in the field of SMM, etc.;
4. Resource orientation: implies the identification of the most promising ways of making a profit through the optimal combination of available resources.

**Discussions**

In general, the analysis showed that there is still no single scientific approach in terms of defining the essence, typology, component composition, and structure of business models used in tourism. As before, many researchers do not single out the specifics of tourism services within the framework of certain business structures they consider, even though the tourism business has a number of its pronounced distinctive features, and also has a multiplier effect that ensures its connection with other sectors of the economy, therefore, we believe that this scientific direction requires further development.

Youth tourism is promising for development today. It has gained popularity all over the world, including Kazakhstan, especially in the light of the activation of youth entrepreneurship, therefore further research by the authors will be devoted to the study of the organizational and economic mechanism of interaction of key actors in the business models of tourism companies in the implementation of tourism products for youth, the creation of a matrix for assessing the system characteristics of business models of tour operators and travel agents, and the development of innovative business models of youth tourism for key stakeholders.

**Conclusions**

The results obtained in the scientific article made it possible to carry out a comprehensive assessment of the essence and content of business models based on content analysis of existing conceptual approaches: resource, effective, optimization, costly, featured in the scientometric databases Scopus, Clarivate Analytics and RSCI. This made it possible to clarify the terminological apparatus of the tourism economy in terms of the proposal of the author’s formulation of the concept of «business model».

The types of business models used in the tourism industry were identified: customization model, virtual systems (marketplaces and digital platforms), franchise, and innovative business model; this structure is considered in detail.

**Acknowledgments**

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**References**


Л.В. Тащенова, Д.Г. Мамраева

Туризмдегі бізнес-модельдердің мәні мен типологиясына тұжырымдамалық түсірілген

Андаштағы мәқсат: Туризмдегі бізнес-модельдердің мәні мен негізгі түрлерін же және олардың құрылымдық элементерін анықтау.

Әдіс: Зерттеу мақсатына үшін жетілді көрсетілген объектілер мен объектілерінің функционалдық әрекеттерін әкімді әдіс: туризмдегі бізнес-модельдердің негізгі түрлерін әндықтауға, моделдердің тұтасының ашық мүмкіндік берген жүйелік ғана әдіс; зерттеген бізнес-модельдің құрылымын ерекшелендіретін, олардың құрылымдық қызметтері мен олардың көзқарасы арасындағы бір-біріне қатысты тұратын қатынастарға әрекет қосуға мүмкіндік береді. Керек болса, құрылымдық функционалдық әдіс: қарардың құрылымындағы объектілер мен құрылымдық қызметтер арасындағы бар қатынастарды орнатуға.
Концептуальные подходы к сущности и типологизации бизнес-моделей в туризме

**Цель:** Определение сущности и основных типов бизнес-моделей в туризме, выявление их структурных элементов.

**Методы:** Для достижения цели исследования применены общенаучные методы, в частности, метод контент-анализа, позволивший выявить основные научные исследования, связанные с изучением бизнес-моделей в сфере туризма и гостеприимства; метод системного подхода, который позволил выявить основные типы бизнес-моделей в туризме, раскрыть целостность моделей; структурно-функциональный метод, с помощью которого была выделена структура исследуемых бизнес-моделей, отражена совокупность устойчивых отношений и взаимосвязей между их элементами и их функций относительно друг друга; метод обобщения, нацеленный на установление существующих взаимосвязей между рассматриваемыми экономическими объектами и явлениями; метод графической интерпретации дал возможность наглядно представить разработанные бизнес-модели, используемые туристскими компаниями.

**Результаты:** В статье раскрыты концептуальные подходы к сущности бизнес-моделей в туризме, проведен контент-анализ определений бизнес-модели, на основе которого дано авторское определение данной категории. Выявлены основные компоненты и системные характеристики бизнес-модели. Разработаны и наглядно представлены основные типы бизнес-моделей, используемые туристскими компаниями, в частности, модель кастомизации, модель «виртуальная система», модель «франшиза» и инновационная бизнес-модель. Систематизированы критерии и факторы классификационных типов, среди которых цифровизация, инновационность, клиенто- и ресурсоориентированность.

**Выводы:** Результаты исследования позволили улучшить теорию предпринимательской деятельности в туризме, расширить понятийный аппарат сущности и типологизацию бизнес-моделей в туризме.

**Ключевые слова:** бизнес-модель, типологизация бизнес-моделей в туризме, модель кастомизации, модель «виртуальная туристская платформа», модель «франшиза», инновационная бизнес-модель, предпринимательская деятельность в туризме.

**References**


