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THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY: SERVICE DIGITALISATION

Digitalisation is the process of saturating the physical environment with electronic and digital devices, systems and tools that enable electronic communication exchange between them. This process creates a cyber-physical space where the virtual and physical become integrated. This phenomenon has also affected the tourism and hospitality sector, leading to the emergence of new travel formats such as virtual tourism and 3D tours, as well as the intensive development of online platforms that meet the needs of the tourism industry. The Internet is becoming an essential tool for business development in the hospitality industry. Creating their own websites allows companies to offer unique offers, use low-cost advertising formats, and communicate electronically with consumers, partners, and tour operators [Кухарук, та ін., 2024]. A well-designed and user-friendly website not only increases business visibility, but also allows you to collect user data by customising the interface to suit their needs.

To ensure continuous and efficient communication with customers, hospitality companies are actively using chatbots. Integrating chatbots into platforms such as Facebook Messenger, Telegram, and Viber saves time and resources, reducing the workload of specialists. These technologies provide an individual approach to each consumer, are able to identify their needs, create personalised offers, and segment the customer base. This allows businesses to send out newsletters, keep records of customer relations and accept payments through integration with payment systems [Кирилюк, та ін., 2022].

Social networks play an important role in promoting the hospitality industry, providing businesses with the opportunity to quickly connect with potential customers,

reduce costs and increase profits. Social media is steadily growing in popularity among Internet users, now accounting for 53,6 per cent of the world's population. While websites remain important to users, activity is increasingly shifting to mobile browsers.

According to App Annie, only 8% of time spent on mobile devices by Android users is devoted to mobile web browsers, while 92% of time is spent using mobile apps.

The leading channel for promoting hotel and restaurant services in the conditions of digitalisation is the actual website of the establishment, and consumer feedback - representation in Internet booking systems (Booking.com, TripAdvisor, etc.) and the work of publishers of hospitality industry establishments in social networks, active maintenance of the page and creation of communication with a potential client [Кирилюк, та ін., 2022].

Having a cafe or restaurant with wi-fi and its own website has not made an impression for a long time. The technologies of promotion of the site in social networks are becoming more and more widespread, as by means of high-quality and bright pictures, advertising, promotions and drawings the number of potential clients is growing rapidly. And the application of QR code and cashless payment by means of pay pass technology is an integral attribute of a successful modern restaurant, which provides clients with speed and safety in search, selection and payment

Hotels around the world are actively implementing chatbot-based solutions, adding this convenient guest service channel to their offerings. Hotel chatbots and intelligent assistants can improve the guest experience.

Hotel chatbots have emerged as a powerful tool, helping hotel owners and managers meet growing demand for personalized services and seamless communication. The global chatbot market projected to reach \$1,25 billion by 2025, and the hospitality industry is a key driver of chatbot adoption. Chatbots are no longer just a trend; they are an essential component of modern hotel management.

Moreover, guests show considerable interest in staying at hotels that offer chatbots as an additional support and service channel.

According to Statista, almost 80% of travellers worldwide are interested in having an intelligent automated assistant during their stay (Fig. 1) [Intellias, 2024]

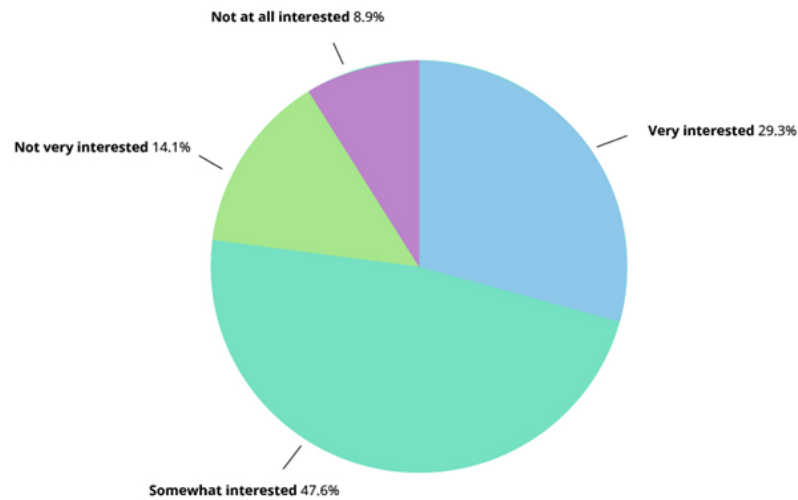


Figure 1. Share of hotel guests interested in a hotel supporting a chatbot or automated messaging

Active use of information technology in the hotel and restaurant business contributes to the growth of the number of visitors, increases the range of products and services, expands the scope of ways to conveniently perform tasks for employees, as well as, undoubtedly, the implementation of the latest unique solutions of enterprise management.

Digitalisation in tourism and hospitality plays an important role in the development of the industry by providing new opportunities for consumer interaction. Innovative technologies such as online booking, gamification and virtual reality are creating a new standard of service that meets the requirements of the modern consumer. This allows not only to meet the needs of customers, but also to significantly improve the efficiency of business processes in the industry, forming new trends in tourism and hospitality.

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THE WORK OF THE HOTEL AND RESTAURANT ESTABLISHMENTS IN UKRAINE IN THE CONDITIONS OF WAR

The work of hotel and restaurant business is an important indicator of the country's economic stability. The war in Ukraine has dramatically changed the conditions of functioning of institutions in this area. Many businesses were forced to close or adapt to new realities, including a decline in the purchasing power of the population. Migration processes that changed customer flows and general demand for services were also significantly influenced. Security issues, restrictions on operations in the frontline regions and logistical difficulties were also important aspects [Безуглий та ін., 2024].

The war has significantly affected the number of existing establishments in the sphere of temporary accommodation and catering facilities. While in 2021 there were 69,7 thousand establishments in Ukraine, in 2022 this figure dropped to 57,7 thousand, which is explained by the mass closure of enterprises through hostilities, migration of the population and economic instability. However, in 2023 there was a partial recovery of the industry - the number of establishments increased to 67,3 thousand units as a