

УДК

БІЗНЕС-ТУРИЗМ — ВИКЛИК ДЛЯ ТУРИСТИЧНОГО ПЕРСОНАЛУ

Анна Каліновська-Зелезнік

Гданський університет

вул. Вося Будзиша 4, м. Сопот 81-817, Польща, тел. (+48) 606-90-32-26

Глобалізація світової економіки і пов'язана з цим процесом інтенсифікація ділових, наукових і культурних зв'язків перетворили діловий туризм на одну з провідних галузей світового господарства, що динамічно розвиваються. З кожним роком ділові, культурні і наукові зв'язки між регіонами і країнами стають усе більш інтенсивними. Діловий туризм відіграє в цьому важливу роль. Розвиток національної економіки та інтеграція її в світовий ринок теж немислимі без розвитку сфери ділового туризму. Одночасно з інтеграційними процесами в Європі, збільшується кількість зустрічей, організованих для бізнес-туристів. У них надзвичайно специфічні вимоги та очікування, що стає своєрідним викликом для персоналу, задіяного в туризмі.

Проаналізовано природу бізнес-туризму, виділено його основні сегменти, зважаючи на мету та причину подорожі (участь у виставках та ярмарках, конференціях, конгресах, семінарах тощо). До персоналу, який задіяний в обслуговуванні бізнес-туристів, ставляться особливі вимоги. Описано обов'язки менеджера із зустрічей, який в ієрархії посад туристичного персоналу в бізнес-сегменті займає найвищу сходинку. Проведено ретельний аналіз вимог, щодо роботи персоналу: спеціаліста з комунікації, менеджера з планування, спеціаліста з інформації.

Подано ключові настанови для туристичного персоналу, задіяного в бізнес-туризмі, шляхом опису конкретних кроків на кожному із етапів підготовки та проведення бізнес-зустрічей – від визначення цілей та мети планованого заходу, до підведення підсумків та підбиття результатів після його проведення.

Ключові слова: бізнес-туризм, туристичний персонал, менеджер-організатор бізнес-зустрічей, професійні якості.

As the process of European integration is still going on, there is noticed an increase of number of meetings that are organized for business tourists. Their specific needs and expectations became a challenge for a tourism personnel. The process of training of a business tourism personnel should include elements that create new job positions as PCO², meeting planner and meeting manager.

Business tourism as a part of meeting planning has been recognized as a profession in many western countries. Meetings have been a part of people's lives since earliest recorded history. From the peoples' forums in Greece and Rome, King Arthur's Round Table, religious meetings in all faiths and in governmental bodies, to modern times, meetings, in one form or another, have been an integral part of our human life. Many times we participate a meeting and sometimes we organize it, then we become meeting planners and managers.

Broadly speaking, a *meeting* is an encounter between entities, not necessarily between people; that is "I met the idea in Philip Kotler's book" or "I met the bear in the woods" or "We met at the dance last night". However, for this article purposes, a meeting is defined more

specifically. A meeting is a planned communication encounter between two or more persons for a common purpose.

There are two key ideas in this definition: people and common purpose. People, according to experts in psychology and sociology, have the unique abilities of memory, thinking and communication. Further, people react to emotions and intellectual stimuli based upon their particular needs for desire. Common purpose means that people participate the meeting to learn something, to influence each other, to be entertained or to solve a problem through communication.

According to the above definition, meetings could be organized in many different areas of peoples' activity (e.g. a political party's convention, trade fair, a seminar, a movie festival, etc.). Many meetings are also organized in a business tourism area. The following figure presents segments of business tourism as far as reasons of traveling are concerned.

Meetings that fulfill the above mentioned reasons of traveling are: conferences, congresses, seminars, courses, trade fairs, exhibitions, incentives, others.

A description of the business tourism today is a challenging and complex task. However there are two fundamental factors that make meetings, as a form of communication, a very useful and effective tool. The first factor is the increasing need for education and training. Workers and managers alike constantly need to upgrade their skills and knowledge. The second factor is that we have become an information society and most of all information today is transferred not through college courses or books but via Internet and meetings.

These two factors are interrelated. An information society requires more and more specialization from its people, and meetings provide the interactive communication medium for transmission and learning of the required information and skill.



Figure 1. Segments of business tourism.

Authority: B. Hołderna-Mielcarek „Turystyka biznesowa-ważny segment gospodarki turystycznej” in Rynek turystyczny nr 21-22, November 1997, p.13.

As recently as early 70-ties of the twentieth century, many executives “held meetings” because it was traditional to do so. They would call in a secretary and say “I want to have a meeting – get me a hotel, some meeting space and some food and drinks”. Those days are almost gone. The modern executive identifies a problem and calls a meeting to solve it. Then he expects to yield returns for the money spent on this meeting. It doesn’t matter whether an in-house employee or an outside business tourism agency plans the meeting, the bottom line has become return on investment.

Business tourism is more flexible than non-business tourism as far as its sensitivity to specific conditions (e.g. time, income, prices) are concerned. The business tourist has also different needs and expectations. For example, apart from comfortable bed, he expects from the hotel Internet connection and 24 hours room service of the highest quality. Business tourism personnel’s activities must be creative, safe, and sometimes offering non-material facilities. The personnel that satisfy tourists’ needs is a fundamental element of a tourism product[6]. The training process of business tourism personnel should be supported then by many scientific disciplines, such as: management, law, psychology. And development of new courses should also use contact between educators and the tourism industry[5].

Professional Skills of the Meeting Manager – a Leader of Business Tourism Personnel.

There are many people involve in a process of a meeting’s production. However a leader of business tourism personnel is the meeting manager and the meeting manager’s duties include:

- determining objectives for the meeting;
- projecting and managing budgets;
- developing agendas and meeting patterns;
- planning on-site registration;
- performing site inspections;
- contract negotiations;
- on-site management;
- postmeeting evaluations.

Sometimes, business tourism personnel members also arrange by themselves:

- reserving a property;
- sleeping rooms;
- food and beverage functions;
- audiovisual equipment;
- air and ground transportation;
- pre- and postmeeting tours;
- on-site registration;
- special events (like banquets, recreation).

However, mostly, the last mentioned duties belong to the facilitators, and the meeting manager just controls their work. It must be stressed, that the role of business tourism professionals depends on their professional skills and how well prepared they are to be managers, not just facilitators.

In performing the duties of manager, the following list includes a few roles and their related job requirements:

1. Communication Specialist

- knowledge of learning theory, principles and practices of how people learn and change;
- knowledge of effective presentation methods to meet the objectives of each session and the meeting.

2. Manager-Planner

– application of administrative skills (the meeting manager recruits, selects and develops a staff, plans programs, sets up the process of coordination and communication, carries out financial planning for the meeting, and so on),

– plan for achieving goals and objectives (the meeting manager agrees on and understands the goals and objectives of the organization, gathers information on the nature of the current situation, involves others in the process, diagnoses needs and sets planning objectives and goals, chooses alternative courses of action, prepares the plan and secures approval of the final plan);

3. Information Specialist

– identify information needed;

– clarify, synthesize and distribute information;

– act as an organization communication link (that means, that the meeting manager accessible for those who are working on the meeting, develops trust between people about plans and problems and then is truthful with people about plans and problems, defines responsibilities of others in terms of the meeting).

4. Consultant to Management

– the problem-solving function (the meeting manager helps management to examine organizational problems, develops the meeting plan within the organization policies and guidelines, provides consultation for management on evaluation and reviews of the planned program);

– the internal consultant function (the meeting manager gives advice to management, persuades management as to a proper approach and assists in problem solving).

To be up to the above mentioned roles, the meeting manager should be an owner of such personal factors as: skills as a person and self-image, ability to work with others and experience in the areas of the problems.

Phases of Professional Meeting Development – Guidelines for the Business Tourism Personnel Training Process. There are seven phases that are concerns of the meeting manager during the process of meeting conceptualization and production.

Phase I: Establishment of Organization and Meeting Goals, Purposes and Objectives

Goals and purposes of a meeting are usually dictated by organization policy[3]. Goals are long-range targets – sometimes spelled out five or more years in advance. Purposes are generalized, immediate (tactical) targets. Accomplishment of purposes should lead the organization toward achieving its goals. Objectives are specific and measurable. An individual meeting should have one and only one primary or first level objective that is measurable (for example: increase sales by 10% in six months following the meeting).

Establishing the organization goals, purposes and objectives is the first, basic step in meeting manager's work. They provide for orderly planning and management of a meeting. They indicate, by means of statements, what is expected from everyone involved and supply the basis for measurement and evaluation of what is achieved.

In this phase the meeting manager should also do "Group History and Analysis". Probably the basic principle of meeting planning most universally accepted by professionals is "know your group". Meeting managers may vary their approaches to collecting and analyzing group data, however there are four general categories that are common:

– Personal characteristics and preferences;

– Geographical characteristics;

– Previous meeting characteristics;

– Policy characteristics and their interpretation by the organization.

Phase II: Budgeting and Financial Management. There are two steps in this phase.

Step One: Once the objectives have been clearly stated and the group analysis is done, it is necessary to develop a preliminary budget. Then, after detailed cost analysis the final meeting budget can be produced.

Step Two: It is a process of controlling the final meeting budget. This process also contains accounting procedures, so sometimes the meeting manager needs help of a qualified accountant specialist.

Phase III: Developing a Meeting Plan and Agenda.

After accomplishment of phases 1 and 2, the meeting manager can develop a meeting plan and its agenda.

A difficult task for the meeting amateur is the development of a meeting plan. In fact, many people in the meeting industry do not develop a plan. They go by experience or by using guesswork. However, as the industry becomes more demanding and more sophisticated, the need and demand for plans are increasing. There are three general models that are used by meeting managers today:

The first one is “checklist”. The checklist model is the least precise of the models, however it makes the user certain that nothing has been omitted. Sections of a checklist can be given subordinates as a “job description” for a meeting. It also provides the basis for determining activities for the more precise and sophisticated models, such as The Gantt model. The Gantt model adds time of accomplishment, usually represented by a form of bar graphs, to the checklist[2]. The meeting manager anticipates a necessary completion date prior to the meeting and makes it visible. The third and the most sophisticated of the planning models is PERT (Program Evaluation Review Technique). Essentially, PERT is a system calling for listing activities, sequencing activities to produce events (a completed activity) and drawing a “bubble chart”[1]. Mathematical calculations are used to predict times for accomplishment of activities. The mathematical approach provides a higher degree of accuracy than the time projections used in Gantt model.

When a meeting plan is ready, the meeting agenda is being prepared. The meeting agenda grows out of the meeting plan. It is the entire sequence of meeting events from arrival to departure. It encompasses check-in, hospitality and food functions, recreation and entertainment, and all sessions.

Phase IV: Determining Destination and Site Selection.

There are four factors that determine a meeting destination: transportation, climate, past meeting history and facility adequacy. Site selection involves sleeping space, meeting space, service and accessibility, and food and beverage capability.

It is important to remember, that the site provides the communication arena for the meeting. Its facilities, services and décor exist, for the meeting manager, for one purpose – to facilitate effective communication during the meeting.

Phase V: Planning Publicity, Promotion and Public Relations for a Meeting.

All meetings, no matters how small, require promotion. The fundamental issue is publicity. The meeting manager must collect and organize the facts about a meeting and the organization. What kind of facts do we need? The following list should be considered as a guide to the kind of material that is needed for promotion and for public relations:

- Site and destination facilities, attractions and special events;
- Meeting special events (banquets, entertainment, tours, recreation, featured speakers);
- Speaker and/or artist biographies and pictures;
- The meeting theme;
- Weather information for the destination;

- Clothing recommendations;
- Terminal-to-site transportation information;
- Air or ground transportation information and recommended procedures;
- Meeting schedule (from meeting plan and agenda).

Once the meeting manager has collected the facts, it is time to plan the promotional/marketing strategy, which is based on two basic considerations: a market study and a marketing plan.

Publicity, promotion and public relations each have distinct roles in ensuring a successful meeting. Publicity secures and releases data, promotion focuses on attendance and public relations centers on organization and meeting image enhancement.

Phase VI: Registration Procedures and On-Site Management.

The goals of any registration process, whether accomplished manually or by computer, in advance or on-site, are accuracy and efficiency. Both must be achieved within certain time and budget constraints. The responsibility of the meeting manager is to develop a precise method of dealing with paper and people that saves time and reduces attendee frustration.

The meeting manager's main tool which is used during on-site management process are his communication skills. On-site management has to deal with problems in order to ensure a smooth and effective meeting.

Phase VII: Meeting Evaluation.

Evaluation is one of the most difficult tasks facing the meeting manager. Ideally, evaluations should be based upon a statistical analysis. However, there are many intangible and subjective factors that affect meeting success, many not measurable by objective methods. It is recommended to add some space for subjective individual comment to the meeting evaluation form. There are two categories to be evaluated: the destination/site and the program. The evaluation process is used to determine if the meeting met its purposes and objectives and the needs of the attendees.

Business tourism as a part of meeting planning is better recognized in western countries than eastern ones. Meanwhile business tourism development is getting noticed. People of the same interests or profession meet to learn something, to influence each other, to enter to new business relations. Business travels express the high level of social and economic status and professionalism of business tourism personnel is an accelerator of this industry development.

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BUSINESS TOURISM – A CHALLENGE FOR TOURISM PERSONNEL

Anna Kalinowska-Zeleznik

University of Gdansk

ul. Wosia Budzysza 4, Sopot 81-817, Poland, tel. (+48) 606-90-32-26

As the process of European integration is still going on, there is noticed an increase of number of meetings that are organized for business tourists. Their specific needs and expectations became a challenge for a tourism personnel. The process of training of a business tourism personnel should include elements that create new job positions as professional conference organizer, meeting planner and meeting manager. The article presents business tourism as a part of meeting planning. Further on the status of business tourism and specific expectations of business tourists were presented. Further on all competences and duties of the leader of business tourism personnel – the meeting manager were pointed, as well as guidelines for the training process of business tourism personnel. At the end it was stressed that business travels express the high level of social and economic status and professionalism of business tourism personnel is an accelerator of this industry development.

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