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MARKETING RISKS IN THE FORMATION OF TOURIST CLUSTERS

Abstract. *This article is devoted to the analysis of the importance of marketing risks associated with a tourist cluster. The importance of considering social influences, planning efficiency when creating a tourism cluster project and its components is determined. The article highlights the problem of insufficient competent distribution of responsibility of state bodies and small businesses in the issues of marketing lists. The article analyzes the state of the situation of risk accounting and distribution in the Russian Federation in the interaction of the public and private sectors. A brief overview of the possible prerequisites for the occurrence of risks in the implementation of projects is given. In addition, a list of negative consequences of the studied risks is provided and several measures to reduce them are proposed. The final part of the paper briefly describes the current state of implementation of cluster initiatives in the Russian Federation. When writing the work, domestic research and foreign publications were used.*

Keywords: *information and communication risks, public private partnership, risk management, tourism cluster, risk allocation, classification of risks, risks of tourism clusters, distribution of funds.*

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МАРКЕТИНГОВЫЕ РИСКИ ПРИ ФОРМИРОВАНИИ ТУРИСТСКИХ КЛАСТЕРОВ

Статья посвящена анализу значимости маркетинговых рисков при создании туристского кластера. Определена важность учета общественных влияний, эффективности планирования при создании проекта туристического кластера и его составляющих. Освещается проблема недостаточного грамотного распределения ответственности государственных органов и малого бизнеса в вопросах маркетинговых рисков. В статье анализируется состояние ситуации учета и распределения рисков в Российской Федерации при взаимодействии государственного и частного секторов. Дан краткий обзор возможных предпосылок возникновения рисков при реализации проектов. Кроме того, приводится перечень негативных последствий изучаемых рисков и предлагается ряд мер по их снижению. В заключительной части работы кратко описано текущее состояние реализации кластерных инициатив территории Российской Федерации. При написании работы использовались отечественные исследования и зарубежные публикации.

Ключевые слова: информационно-коммуникационные риски, государственно-частное партнерство, управление рисками, туристический кластер, распределение рисков, классификация рисков, риски туристских кластеров, распределение средств

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Relevance of the work. In the conditions of intensive development of the production market, the service sector is one of the main positions of the country's economy. The tourism industry, which contributes the most to strengthening the international position of the state and is characterized by its dynamism, occupies a large share of this sector. Due to the high demand and growing demand for the services provided, tourism largely determines the direction and speed of the country's economy. The development of this segment of public life makes it possible to implement a number of socio-economic issues of our time, such as unemployment, the level of preservation of cultural heritage, improving the quality of life of citizens, and much more.

Nevertheless, given the amount of potential tourism resources in Russia, they are used far from rationally and not effectively, which leads to low indicators of the contribution of the tourist segment to the country's GDP. The reason for this is the low competitiveness of the objects being created, the use of outdated and poorly effective technologies, and the presence of a large number of risks. It is the latter that has the greatest impact on the inhibition of the formation of tourist clusters. Prevention and rapid identification of risks is available through the use of a competent marketing strategy.

Given the diversity of risks, as well as their areas of occurrence (both within the cluster and in the external environment), effective resistance to them and the distribution of responsibility of government agencies and businesses is becoming one of the most pressing issues of our time.

The purpose of the work was to analyze the situation of risk distribution in the Russian Federation, as well as to determine the prerequisites for their occurrence.

Risks are an integral part of any project, including projects related to the formation of tourist clusters. Tourism cluster is a collection of tourist recreational special economic zones created by

decision of the government of the Russian Federation and located on one or more parts of the territory of the RF subjects and municipal entities determined by the government of the Russian Federation. [10] The cluster approach in tourism is used all over the world. The most striking example is the development of tourist areas in Hungary, where the division of the country into microregions and their definition in clusters helped to strengthen the development of tourism to a large extent. This experience was largely successful due to the successful interaction of the state and business, as most often implies the implementation of such projects. Traditionally, the state interacts with specially created project companies, which can be classified as small or medium-sized businesses [9].

Implementing such large projects as tourism clusters, it is very important to separate the areas of responsibility of the partners and distribute the risks. The issue of risk distribution in the creation of tourism clusters is one of the key points of decision-making on cooperation between small businesses and the state. In commercial projects the initiator of the project assumes all risks. In PPP (public private partnership) projects, there is a great advantage in the form of flexible risk allocation between private (SEC – a special project company) and public partners. Risks refer to events that have a negative impact on the project such as increased costs, missed deadlines, insufficient demand, force majeure, etc. The distribution of risks between the concessionaire (business) and the concessionaire (state) is carried out on a contractual basis¹.

Risk management is the most important step towards achieving the best Value for Money (VfM) ratio, which is the basis for implementing projects to create tourist clusters. Failure to control risks can lead to serious consequences including a decrease in the quality of services, changes in deadlines, cost overruns and the inability to fulfill obligations under the contract. Risk

¹ Rasschety Nacional'nogo centra GChP na osnove dannyh Global Infrastructure Hub, Rosstata i Banka Rossii [The calculations of the National PPP center based on data from the Global Infrastructure Hub, Rosstat and Bank of Russia].

management involves identifying key risks and how they can be effectively distributed between public and private parties².

The ideal value of a VfM and a PPP agreement that requires no concessions from either party is very difficult to achieve. Risk allocation is not an easy task. Effective risk allocation is aimed at transferring specific risks to the party that is most able to control them with minimal costs, while in practice they are allocated to the party that is in a weaker position, which is not able to abandon this burden [10]. Despite the fact, that experts from all over the world have proposed many concepts and methodologies for the rational allocation of risks, this topic is still open. To date, the standard risk distribution scheme (enlarged) is as follows (Table 2).

Table 2 Consolidated risk matrix³

Types of risks	Responsible party	
	The private partner	Public partner
Building	+	
Commercial	+	+
Political		+
Legal issues	+	+
Financial	+	

As can be seen from the table, to date, marketing risks are not considered in the distribution of responsibility. This means that when the risk is realized, the ability to quickly respond to an event is reduced, which can negatively affect the project implementation process. Recall that effective risk management involves the identification, assessment of risks and their distribution. To do this, you need to structure the risks. The classification of risks has been discussed repeatedly, which indicates the complexity of this issue. Some authors suggest grouping risks into categories, in which their specific types are sorted according to certain

criteria, such as causes of occurrence, results, or strength of impact. The simplest classification can be the separation of micro - and macro-level risks. This approach distinguishes two main categories:

- Special risks arising from the way the project is managed or from events occurring in its microenvironment (everything that the project directly interacts with). These may include natural risks related to soil problems, weather conditions; technical problems related to structures, plants and equipment; material problems related to suppliers, logistics, etc.

- General risks that are not directly related to the project activity, but at the same time have a significant impact on the result. They usually arise as a result of natural, political, legal, and economic events in the overall macro environment surrounding the project.

As a rule, more attention is paid to special risks, while general ones are left out. The legislation of the Russian Federation, namely the Federal Law "On Public-Private Partnership and Municipal-Private Partnership" N224-FZ and the Federal Law "On Concession Agreements" N115-FZ, only establish the principle of fair distribution of risks while the distribution is regulated by a specific agreement and is prescribed in the "Special circumstances" to the agreement. In practice, almost all of them fall on the shoulders of the business. Under ideal conditions the state should take on the overall risks [4]. But, as we know from the practice of the last five years, the state is reluctant to take risks, and often cannot prevent the damage that occurs when they occur. The most striking example was 2014 year, when the ruble suddenly weakened, political tensions increased, and an unprecedented outflow of foreign investment from the country emerged. There is a need to emphasize that according to the rules, the

² Department of infrastructure and regional development. (2014). Infrastructure. Productivity Commission Inquiry Report Commonwealth of Australia 2014 // URL: https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/infrastructure/publications/files/Productivity_Commission_Inquiry_Report_into_Public_Infrastructure.pdf (Accessed on November 10, 2020).

³ Source: developed by the author based on Recommendations for the implementation of PPP projects in the subjects of the Ministry of Economic development of the Russian Federation. (2018). Recommendations for the implementation of public-private partnership projects. Best practices // URL: <https://www.economy.gov.ru/material/file/cd482f73c03b658fa97a2d844c7e39d9/metodic2018.pdf> (Accessed on November 10, 2020).

consequences of the implementation of the risk should be eliminated by the party that assumed responsibility for the risk in the agreement.

An example of marketing risks, the main part of which is information and communication risks, can be the following risks:

- Publications in various media and social networks aimed at forming a negative perception of the tourist project, companies or persons involved in its implementation;
- Lack of tourist flow and profit as a result associated with insufficient promotion of the project;
- Exclusion of a certain category of tourists (high-income tourists or low-income tourists) associated with incorrect product positioning;
- A large influence of the seasonality factor – a sharp reduction in demand. In case of insufficient elaboration of the marketing concept of the product in different seasons.

Of course, this list can and should be expanded, which is usually what consortia do. The lack of attention to this category of risks can result in unexpected changes in the regulatory framework, the emergence of a negative background in the media, accusations of corruption, low quality of project preparation and implementation. All this, in the end, will lead to serious reputational and financial losses, which will cause special interest from the supervisory authorities and the need to adjust the project.

The group of risks associated with the reputation of the small business implementing the project and the tourism cluster itself can be called information and communication risks. According to Hyperion Strategy Group, over the past two years, due to the triggering of information and communication risks, infrastructure projects worth more than 250 billion rubles was put at risk of failure.⁴

The projects for the construction of tourist clusters are closely connected with the

population, so their implementation always causes a wide public response. Lack of proper attention to the public can lead to serious deviations from the project implementation plan. Attention from public organizations, regulatory authorities, environmental communities, opposition political groups and end users of the infrastructure objects being created should be adjusted, setting the necessary vector for it⁵. In general, there are five main prerequisites for the emergence of information and communication risks:

1. From the stage of project initiation, a lot of information events appear in the network in the upcoming cluster. Since journalists cannot have direct access to all the information, they must look for the right facts that arouse public interest.

2. The emergence of information reasons that form a negative public opinion in relation to the SEC or the project. For example, temporary road closures, power outages, noise, etc.)

3. Some opposition media a priori negatively meet and cover any state projects, including the construction of tourist clusters.

4. Selection of the concessionaire is on a competitive basis. participants in the selection process may resort to unfair competition, looking for weaknesses and shortcomings of their rivals.

The term information and communication risks (ICR) mentioned more than once is not a scientific concept, since it is practically not found in research papers covering the topic of infrastructure projects and PPP projects. More often, the authors mention public risks or political risks that do not accurately reflect the essence of ICR. Let's understand what is meant by information and communication risks.

- These are publications in various media, media and social networks, news about the project or a circle of people close to it that have a negative connotation.

- Public unrest and protests the project or

⁴ Hyperion Strategic Group. Information and communication risks — blind spot for infrastructure projects // URL: https://hyperion-sg.ru/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/IKR_KS_A4_V1.pdf (Accessed on November 19, 2020)

⁵ Global Infrastructure Project Pipeline // URL: <https://pipeline.github.org> (Accessed on November 19, 2020)

for the revision of the terms.

- Internal conflicts between the concessionaire and the concessionaire, investors, related to the inconsistency of actions, the pursuit of personal interests to the detriment of common, incorrect distribution of powers and responsibilities.

- Dissemination of unverified and unreliable information about the project and its participants by its opponents, especially the opposition movement of the current government.

- Sabotage of the concession agreement by sending complaints and requests for verification of the project to special bodies, public and environmental organizations and other associations.

And this is not a complete list of negative manifestations of this category of risks.

It is possible to prevent their occurrence if all possible causes of their occurrence are identified in advance. As a rule, at the initial stage, they can be associated with accusations coming to a private or public partner.

To mitigate and minimize information and communication risks, the following measures are taken in practice:

- analysis of the socio-economic environment of the project in order to identify and describe external and internal factors that affect the appearance of ICR;

- evaluation of the texts of legal documents in order to identify potentially dangerous formulations, as well as ways to minimize the risk of misinterpretation;

- development of a strategy for information support, which should include targets, media plan, the nature and content of key messages, scenarios for working with ICR in accordance with the tasks throughout the entire life cycle;

- fixing the obligations of the parties to prevent and mitigate ICR in the text of the concession and PPP agreements.⁶

Conclusion. Summing up all the above, it can be concluded that information and communication risks are one of the most important issues that must be considered when implementing projects for the construction of tourist clusters. Working with the population, forming a positive attitude to the project and working out accusations and negative public opinion in a high-quality manner is an essential component of preparing and implementing any project in civil society. Now ICR is practically not considered in national projects for the construction of clusters, which often leads to negative consequences. Implementing the marketing component in the structure of these projects can significantly reduce the risk of occurrence of ICR, pre-identifying and developing all possible accusations against the concessionaire and the grantor, to respond quickly to emerging issues and discontent.

In 2015, the Federal tourism Agency announced the construction of 63 tourist clusters. At the moment, according to various data, only 22 are under construction or functioning. From successful practice, only 3-4 projects can be named. The construction of many clusters was frozen after the state spent budget funds on the creation of communication infrastructure (roads, electricity and gas pipelines, etc.). This suggests that when concluding an agreement between business and the state, possible risks were not considered, which subsequently destroyed the projects.

Today, the continuation of these projects is questionable. All over the world, tourism is developing due to the close interaction of the state and business. Especially small businesses, since 90% of the representatives of the tourism industry in Russia are small and medium-sized enterprises, which have been particularly difficult in the last 6 years. It is difficult for Russian tourism to compete with foreign destinations, so commercial activity in this market segment is low. Business openly says that it is unprofitable to develop this sector in our country: too much tax burden, poor credit

⁶ Delmond, V.R. & ChaoManaging, J. (2017) PPP risk with a new guide on guarantees. World Bank Group. // URL: <https://ppp.worldbank.org/public-private-partnership/managing-ppp-risks-a-new-guide-on-guarantees> (Accessed on November 28, 2020)

conditions, corruption and many bureaucratic procedures. A more competent policy of promoting projects will help to avoid several information and communication risks associated with the

interaction of the state and the private partner, as well as attract public attention and form a positive attitude to such projects.

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