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**Abstract:** This study aims to deal with the actual problem of managing tourist destinations organization to increase the competitive potential of the domestic tourist market. In order to accomplish the goal, the authors studied the comparative advantages of the Stavropol Territory as a tourist destination that should become its competitive advantages if implemented through a comprehensive destination management system. The strategy taken into account on the opportunities to maximize the strengths and compensate for the current competitive weaknesses of tourism development in Stavropol. The complex tourist destination competitiveness model and the system of its management in the Stavropol Territory depend on creating a regional organization for tourist destination management that would coordinate practices of the key regional tourism actors, ensure their interests and develop their interaction. On the example of the Stavropol Territory, the authors propose an alternative model of the tourist destination management system, which is to be implemented through mechanisms and practices of planning, development and increasing competitiveness of the tourist destination and to be institutionalized in the form of a regional organization for the tourist destination management. This model can contribute significantly to the social and economic development of the given region.

**Keywords:** tourist destination, tourist market, tourist potential, control system.

### **Introduction**

Positioning, promotion and organization of a tourist destination is one of the main tasks when it comes to increasing the attractiveness of a region from a tourist point of view. According to worldwide experience, the organization of destinations plays a key role in the management of their development and is only possible as an accumulated joint effort of all tourism actors involved. In this study, management of a tourist destination is considered on the example of the Stavropol Territory, where despite a significant tourist and recreational potential, strategic tourism development programs and activities undertaken by regional authorities, the tourist flow and the share of tourist services in the structure of GRP remain insignificant.

In this regard, the relevance of the research topic is determined by the need for significant developments that would ensure an effective organization of the tourist destination of the Stavropol Territory implemented through concrete practices in the planning and development of its competitiveness potential. Thus, management of the Stavropol tourist destination demands a unified approach embracing all the parties involved and a mechanism that would promote the region as a tourist destination both on the Russian and international tourist markets.

The aim of the study is to suggest a comprehensive competitiveness model of a tourist destination, apply it to the development of the tourist destination of Stavropol, and based on international experience work out a management system of the tourist destination in question.

The methodological basis of the research comprises the general scientific research methods, as well as the dialectical, systemic-logical, complex, observation, comparison, factor study and others methods that allow to ensure the reliability and validity of the conclusions and recommendations formulated by the authors.

**Results**

For the first time a comprehensive model of a tourist destination competitiveness has been applied to the development of the tourist destination of Stavropol. A whole system of management of the tourist destination of the Stavropol Territory has been evolved based on international experience.

Also, an alternative model of tourist destination management is proposed on the example of the Stavropol Territory. It is implemented through mechanisms and practices of planning, development and ensuring the competitiveness of the tourist destination, which are institutionalized in the form of a regional organization for the management of the destination of the Stavropol Territory (OMD ST), based on the interaction of the key actors of tourism and ensuring their interests, which previously has not been considered in scientific research by other authors.

The unique characteristics of the proposed model of destination management are the organizational management structure and functions of the executive body of the organization as well as an electronic system of tourist destination management (eOMD ST).

**Discussion**

Despite some positive dynamics in the development of the tourism industry in the region, the Stavropol Territory does not occupy a leading position in Russia, being significantly inferior to the competitor regions. The contribution of tourism to the economy of the region accounts for about 1.1%. The most common for the region in terms of turnover (total cost of tickets sold) and the number of tourists served is outbound tourism (up to 90% of the tourist market of the Stavropol Territory) (Burnyasheva, Pavlyuchkova, 2015).

On these premises, it would be reasonable to link the strategic guidelines for the development of the tourist destination of Stavropol with an active development of its infrastructure.

It is obvious that the demand from tourists for the Stavropol destination, as well as strategic prospects for its development, largely depend not only on the national factors, but also on the global trends. The most significant of them as specified by the professional community are the following:

1. The progressive growth of tourist arrivals with the preservation of their major geographical architectonics.
2. The dependence of tourism on the crisis processes in economy, nature, society, as manifested in the fall of tourist activity having though a rapid recovery growth potential (Rud, Kiseleva, Kasaeva, 2015; Nagoev, 2018; Jenaabadi, & Issazadegan, (2014).
3. Concentration and transnationalization in the tourism industry (introduction of constructive mechanisms of state support for small forms of tourism business, as well as their integration into business associations in the format of self-regulatory organizations).
4. Scientific and technological progress, primarily related to the development of information technologies, the use of which allowed creating a global system of tourist navigation (e.g. Amadeus, Galileo, Worldspan, Sabre) for travel companies and the Internet (or alternative) system of distribution of tourist services (e.g. Expedia.com, Orbitz. com, HRS.com, Travelocity.com, Hotels.com, Priceline.com, Hotels.su) for individuals; Internet portals with mobile versions and tourist registers on the basis of regional tourist information centers, virtual tourist products and corporate websites.

5. Sustainable tourism development. This factor is meaningful as the tourist industry acts as a driver of economic processes and a factor of social stability on the one hand and, on the other one, has a significant impact on the natural environment.

6. Changes in consumer preferences of tourists.

7. Active state regulation and strategic positioning of tourism, which is quite fair, bearing in mind the locomotive role of the industry on a global and national scale. (Gorbunov, Gazgireeva, Burnyasheva, Rud, 2016; Tatuev, 2016).

As practice shows, the systemic nature of the development of tourism and related industries provides for coordinated work of all public structures within the tourism policy framework at the state and regional levels at the initial stages, and as it is being implemented – at the local and corporate levels. In this mechanism, national tourism organizations possess a special regulatory status, the main purpose of which is marketing and promotion of national tourism products (Kiryanova, 2014).

One should be mindful of the cause-and-effect relations in the context of promoting the Stavropol destination while forming its holistic vision as a unique tourist product. Although implemented through a variety of tools, there should be a single advertising and information policy, based on the regional tourist information center, which should provide travel agents with a full range of information and marketing services (Morozenko, 2015; Sohrabi, (2017).

Thus, in conditions of high uncertainty and variability of internal factors and external conditions for tourism development, national-state and regional policy, as well as business practices, should be adapted to the perception of such changes. Their comprehensive and systematic analysis allows to take into account global trends and national specifics, to outline territorial and sectoral prospects of cluster initiatives, to consolidate the efforts of the state and business and, finally, to serve as a “road map” for the consistent promotion and implementation of tourism products of the Stavropol destination.

Based on the conceptual model of competitiveness by B. Richie and J. Crouch and the works of S. Pykes, it can be concluded that in order to maintain and develop a competitive regional tourist and recreational complex and promote a tourist product in the domestic and international tourist markets, it is necessary to focus on turning the comparative advantages of the destination into its competitive advantages (Kotler, Haider, Rein, 2013; Sheralieva, (2016).

Only the tourist destinations with a strategy for tourism development, mutual understanding and partnership between the main stakeholders (the state, business, and local residents), a target market with clearly defined and studied needs of tourists, a tourist product and a purposeful campaign for its advance are competitive. The thesis by M. Porter that “Nations that have limited resources are motivated to find innovative ways of overcoming their comparative disadvantages through the development of competitive advantages” is actual with regard to the Stavropol Territory (Shorokhov, 2017). It has a resource base for the development of tourism, which can eventually become a competitive advantage of the region.

Following the logic above, it should be concluded that the comparative advantages of the Stavropol Territory as a tourist destination should become its competitive advantages, which depends entirely on the system of management of the tourist destination development (Burnyasheva and Pavlyuchkov, 2015).

To transform the comparative advantages of the Stavropol Territory as a tourist destination into competitive ones, we propose the development of a comprehensive model of the tourist destination competitiveness and an alternative model of the tourist destination management system on the example of the Stavropol Territory, implemented through

mechanisms and practices for planning, development and ensuring the competitiveness of the tourist destination. These models are institutionalized in the form of a regional organization for the management of the destination, including in its structure a design and research unit, a congress bureau, a tourist information center and an e-OMD system. (Kazantsev, 2014).

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