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PROSPECTS AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES OF THE RESTAURANT INDUSTRY AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL

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Abstract

The article examines the prospects and development strategies of the restaurant industry at the regional level in Ukraine. Despite the challenges caused by military actions, the restaurant industry in Ukraine has shown remarkable resilience, as recent years have seen predominantly positive dynamics in the growth of new establishments. This indicates that the industry is recovering and is able to continue its development.

The Ukrainian foodservice market has characteristic regional features. In some areas, the structure of visitors and target audiences changes, also the demand for restaurants in different segments shifts. There is an increasing demand for simpler and cheaper dishes, as well as a rise in the popularity of delivery services. In some regions, difficulties arise with the supply of key products for specialized establishments, leading to an increase in prices. In regions close to the combat zone, the foodservice market faces significant challenges, particularly due to shelling, infrastructure destruction, while in other areas, it recovers more quickly than in others.

The development of the restaurant industry is crucial for the growth of the economy and the well-being of the population. Therefore, it is more important than ever to focus on promising areas for the development of the industry and with it to work out new strategies, considering modern challenges.

Keywords: restaurant industry; prospects and strategies; regional level; modern challenges.

Анотація. У статті розглянуто перспективи та стратегії розвитку ресторанного господарства на регіональному рівні в Україні. Незважаючи на виклики спричинені військовими діями ресторанне господарство України проявило неабияку стійкість, адже за останні роки спостерігається здебільшого позитивна динаміка приросту нових закладів, це говорить про те, що галузь відновлюється і може продовжувати розвиватися.

Ринку громадського харчування України притаманні характерні особливості за регіонами. Десь змінюється структура відвідувачів і цільова аудиторія, також змінюється попит на ресторани різного сегменту, більш явним стає попит на прості та дешевші страви, зростає популярність послуг з доставки. У деяких регіонах виникають труднощі з постачанням ключових продуктів для спеціалізованих закладів і відповідно зростання ціни на них. У регіонах наближених до зони бойових дій, ринок громадського харчування зазнає значних труднощів. зокрема через обстріли, руйнування інфраструктури, а десь навпаки він відновлюється швидше за інших.

Розвиток ресторанного господарства є важливим для розвитку економічної сфери та рівня добробуту населення, тому сьогодні як ніколи потрібно звернути увагу на перспективні напрямки розвитку галузі і розробляти відповідні стратегії з урахуванням сучасних викликів.

Ключові слова: ресторанне господарство; перспективи та стратегії; регіональний рівень; сучасні виклики.

Statement of the problem in general. Despite the challenges of the war, in 2024, Ukraine's restaurant industry is gradually recovering from significant losses and continues to develop.

According to Pro-Consulting research, the hospitality industry has been able to partially adapt to the new realities. In the western regions of Ukraine, such as Lviv,

Zakarpattia, Chernivtsi and Ivano-Frankivsk, there is an increase in catering establishments by 20–30%, which is due to the movement of internal migrants. In the period 2022–2023, about two thousand new establishments were opened in these regions. In addition, in the first half of 2024, more than 7 thousand new legal entities and individual entrepreneurs in the hospitality sector were registered, which exceeds the indicators for the same period of the previous year.

Their marketing research also revealed a number of features characteristic of the catering market in different regions of Ukraine. In Lviv, the structure of visitors to catering establishments has changed due to a decrease in the number of international tourists, a significant presence of internally displaced persons and military personnel. Demand for simple and cheaper dishes has increased, while prices have risen in the middle and high price segments.

The target audience in Odesa consists mainly of displaced persons from the occupied regions, people on business trips and tourists. Mid-range establishments and various fast food formats remain the most popular. At the same time, traditional fish dishes for the region periodically disappear from the menu due to restrictions on catching and importing fish, and their cost is increasing.

In Kharkiv, the catering sector is working with great difficulty due to constant shelling, prolonged air raids and interruptions in electricity and water supply. The main customers of cafes and restaurants are military and foreign journalists, who provide a significant part of the profits, compensating for the high risks for operators. The most popular establishments remain fast food, cafes, bakeries and shawarma outlets.

Kyiv is demonstrating an almost complete recovery of the catering market. New establishments are opening, including global chains such as McDonald's and KFC, which are actively updating their restaurants. However, the market is experiencing oversaturation in the shawarma segment, while Crimean Tatar and oriental cuisine establishments are gaining popularity. High demand for home and office food delivery remains relevant, in particular due to mobilization measures. At the same time, the luxury restaurant segment continues to lose ground due to the reduction of the solvent audience.

The development of the restaurant industry at the regional level is a key factor in economic growth and social well-being, so attention should be paid to the main prospects for its further development. The main promising areas of development include the analysis of market trends and adaptation to changing consumer needs, the integration of local products,

the restoration of infrastructure, digitalization, the introduction of new formats of establishments and improving the quality of service.

In 2024, restaurant business development strategies in Ukraine are determined by a comprehensive approach to addressing current challenges and realizing the industry's potential. One of the key aspects is the analysis of market trends, which involves studying supply and demand in different regions. Entrepreneurs at the regional level should constantly analyze local market trends, taking into account demographic changes, migration processes, socio-economic factors and consumer preferences. This will allow creating accurate forecasts of demand for restaurant business services and timely adapt the menu, pricing policy and service concept. Also, this approach allows you to identify the most promising locations for opening new establishments, focusing on segments with the greatest potential for growth. This contributes to the efficient use of resources and minimizing risks for the business, while maintaining competitiveness in the market.

Another important component is the integration of local products into the menu of establishments. The use of local products not only improves the quality of dishes, but also supports local producers, contributes to the development of rural areas and reduces logistics costs. Such establishments gain competitive advantages, customer loyalty and contribute to the formation of the image of a responsible business. It is also important to support new concepts, in particular in the field of healthy eating, vegan and organic products, as this is becoming a trend all over the world.

The priority should be the restoration and reconstruction of post-war territories, where the restaurant business can play an important role in creating jobs, attracting investment and restoring social activity. For example, in deoccupied cities there is already a trend of opening new establishments that meet modern standards and influence the formation of a new culture of consumption. Strategies should include supporting investments for the restoration of damaged establishments, the creation of new cultural and tourist facilities. In particular, it is important to actively attract international investors and franchisors to stimulate the development of modern gastronomic and tourist facilities.

One of the key strategies is the implementation of digital tools for order automation, inventory management, sales analytics, and service quality control. The use of modern technologies, such as online ordering systems, CRM systems for analyzing customer data, and automation of management processes, allows you to optimize the work of establishments, reduce costs, and improve the level of service. For example, personalized approaches to customers become possible through the use of analytical tools (such as Zoho CRM, or

Ukrainian KeyCRM). Digital platforms for online ordering and delivery will also help establishments quickly adapt to new realities and attract customers in conditions of constant change.

Given the changes in consumer behavior and preferences, it is important to support new restaurant formats. The growing popularity of food courts, street food, virtual kitchens (dark kitchens) and other modern formats demonstrates the need to adapt to the requirements of speed of service, accessibility and flexibility. For example, virtual kitchens that work only for delivery allow you to significantly reduce costs while remaining competitive.

Special attention should be paid to the training of new personnel, which is the basis for the sustainable development of the industry, taking into account the migration of experienced workers in the field abroad. The creation of training programs that meet modern requirements allows you to train highly qualified specialists, such as chefs, bartenders, managers and other personnel. This contributes to improving the quality of service and creating competitive advantages in the market. It should also be noted that over the past few years, training in higher educational institutions that train new specialists has been carried out mainly online, which may indicate a lack of practical experience and skills. Therefore, they need additional training, for example, through courses and internships in institutions.

Conclusions. It is extremely important to develop targeted strategies for the development of the restaurant industry at the regional level, focusing on promising areas. Analysis of market trends and adaptation to changing consumer needs are key factors in ensuring the sustainable development of the industry. Integration of local products, restoration of infrastructure and implementation of digital technologies are important for strengthening the competitiveness of the regional restaurant business. In addition, the introduction of new formats of establishments and improving the quality of service through training new specialists are critically important components for the further development of the industry.

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