(unikal'nost' prirodnykh lanshaftov, ogromnoe kolichestvo rek, ozer, poy-
mennych lesov);

• glavnymi otritsatel'nymi faktorami являются неэффективная марке-
tingovaya politika i nerasvitaya infrastruktura turisticheskoy industrii.

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Millennials choose e-tourism

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The Internet is revolutionising the distribution and sales of travel and tourism
information. It provides direct access to the end consumers. The internet has
created a universal platform for communication and presentation. The cost of
access to the internet is decreasing, at the same time the speed of access is in-
creasing. All these factors are driving the growth in usage. The web is becoming
more useful — in terms of functions and content — as well as more userfriendly.
It is proved by the figures: Internet travel booking revenue has grown by more
than 73% over the past 5 years.

Tourism industry was once dominated by high levels of customer service and
personal contact, but now travel industry has to adapt to relatively new consumer
trend. More and more people buy a holiday abroad online. Almost 40% of all tour
and activity bookings are being made online. 60% of leisure and 41% of business
travelers are making their own travel arrangements, generally via the Internet.

For an industry that’s as fast-moving and competitive as the travel and tourism
industry, it’s logical to look ahead. It’s important to understand the next genera-
tion of business, family travellers and all the other consumers, who will be the
main consumers of a whole variety of travel products and services in the next
two decades. This generation is known as Millennials. Millennials are those, who
were born between 1990 and 2000. All the figures above will continue to grow
because of this generation. The millennial generation is growing up in a technolo-
gically advanced world where travelling and communication go hand-in-hand
and are easier than ever before. Being the first generation to have grown up in
the era of internet technologies, Millennials are highly connected, technologically
advanced, globally conscious and far more open to trying out new products and
concepts than their parents or grandparents. Thinking about their summer holiday they won’t go to the travel agency. After they know the operator, what packages this operator offers, and how much it costs, Millennials want to lock in a date, pay for it, and receive instant email confirmation that their booking has gone through. They are fluent and comfortable with booking travel plans online, as well as on mobile and tablet devices.

Today e-travel is one of the major trends in tourism, but in a few years all tourism industry will have to change. E-tourism is the digitisation of all the processes and value chains in the tourism, travel, hospitality and catering industries that enable organisations to maximise their efficiency and effectiveness. E-tourism increasingly determines the competitiveness of the organisation and therefore it is critical for the competitiveness of the industry in the longer term.

One more trend, which is connected with e-travel, is personalization. It is something which consumers are increasingly expecting online. Personalization can offer great opportunities for marketing travel operator’s website. In travel distribution, marketing and IT executives need to look at this new technology.

Independent travel and backpacking are now important part of the tourism industry. Advances in computer reservations allow individual holidaymakers to select the destination, accommodation, flight and put together their own packages. But it takes effort and time. Besides agents have developed relations with hotels, concierges, reservation managers. They provide expertise and give advice. That’s why travel agent is not a dead-end job, but their approach should change.

The research shows that Belarusian travel agents and operators should change the way they work now in order to be more competitive on the market in future. There are quite a few travel websites in Belarus (such as INTOURIST.BY) where you can book online and pay at once. Websites show available trips, costs and you even can reserve the whole package but you can’t buy.

The internet is an important distribution source for the travel industry that’s why travel agents should use Internet technologies properly and learn new practical skills. Millennials have high expectations of websites. Website of a tourism agency should load fast, be easy to navigate, contain comprehensive material that answers all the questions and let them secure a booking online.

Online adoption is the key. Travel agent should develop trip proposals. Traveler views and selects online without further travel agent intervention.

Travel agents should use SMM and networks. The most popular social networks in Belarus are Vkonrakte, Instagram, Tweeter. Agents can stick real time photos of happy customers up on website and social networks, as these networks have an effect on millennials. Posting pictures on Instagram, tweeting will help to find new clients and foster company loyalty and to provide clients with new information. Monitoring will help to analyse most competitive locations, events, initiatives on the market.
Millennials are looking for tourism operators with websites that are mobile-friendly, easy to navigate and book through, full of high quality content. Tourism operators that don’t yet have this booking capability need to adapt fast. The agency will spend less time managing bookings because of customers self-serve. Today most websites of Belarusian agencies don’t have mobile version. As the result they miss the opportunities.

So, travel companies need to have the ability to adapt on a short term basis to a changing range of channels and devices to reach this new audience who continue to seek out more ways to plan and book their holidays than ever before.