CZU: 330.15:65.012.34:640.4 **https://doi.org/10.59295/std2024.29**

GREEN LOGISTICS: A SUSTAINABLE APPROACH TO TRANSFORMING THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

Elena CARP
Moldova State University
elena.carp@usm.md
ORCID iD: 0000-0003-0399-6141

Abstract

Green logistics has emerged as a vital strategy for transforming the hospitality industry into a more sustainable and efficient sector. This approach focuses on optimizing supply chain processes, minimizing waste, conserving energy, and reducing environmental footprints while enhancing operational performance. By integrating technologies like smart energy systems, renewable energy sources, and digital platforms, green logistics enables hotels to achieve cost savings and improve resource management. Furthermore, it plays a crucial role in aligning the industry with evolving customer expectations for eco-friendly practices, fostering customer loyalty, and strengthening brand reputations. However, challenges such as limited financial resources and lack of specialized marketing departments remain barriers, particularly for small hotels. Drawing insights from successful strategies implemented by leading hotel chains globally, this paper highlights how green logistics can serve as a roadmap for promoting sustainability, competitiveness, and resilience in the hospitality sector.

Key Words: *green logistics, hospitality industry, sustainability, supply chain, customer loyalty.*

Introduction

In relation to people's travel outside their usual environment and the intensification of their movements over time, a network of industries closely connected to tourism activities has developed. A prime example of this is the hotel industry, which has demonstrated its importance over the course of its evolution as a significant sector for both tourism and the economy as a whole. The hotel industry represents a fundamental component of the hospitality industry, encompassing all activities carried out and services provided during the tourist's stay in collective accommodation facilities. Its primary aim is to meet customer needs and implement measures to encourage repeat visits to the hotel to benefit again from the services offered.

Referring to the history and evolution of the hotel industry, it is necessary to emphasize that its emergence and development are closely tied to the history of tourism and the hospitality industry, as these sectors have evolved interdependently. Thus, as tourists began traveling outside their residential areas and accommodation facilities emerged along the way, favorable conditions were created for the development of the tourism industry. This led to the establishment of the material and technical base of tourism to meet the basic needs of tourists. At the same time, it should be noted that the content of the hotel industry has evolved in parallel with the development of accommodation capacities and their involvement in tourism activities, enriched by new functions and service forms. This highlights the idea that the hotel industry emerged and developed later than the broader accommodation industry, as hotels were not the first accommodation structures.

Results and disscution

Analyzing the definitions proposed by various specialists in the field, both nationally and internationally, we find that the hotel industry represents a branch of the economy primarily focused on

the set of processes that occur within accommodation establishments. These processes are driven by the arrival, reception, stay, and departure of visitors, making it an industry based on the provision of hotel services with the objective of meeting the needs of its clients.

In every definition of the hotel industry, two key concepts emerge that reflect the essence of hotel activities: hotel services and the primary accommodation structure, namely the hotel. Despite the fact that, over the years, a significant number of accommodation facilities with various functions have emerged and developed—such as motels, tourist villas, bungalows, guesthouses, botels, cabins, and others—the hotel remains one of the most well-known and developed types. These accommodation units not only serve as a means to satisfy the physiological needs of clients but also act as important attractions. Nowadays, hotels impress not only through their size but also through their magnificent locations, increasingly creative and grand designs—both exterior and interior—as well as new concepts introduced into the field, more sophisticated and innovative amenities, and a growing emphasis on originality.

Green logistics is essential for the sustainable development of the hospitality industry. By adopting innovative practices, leveraging technology, and adhering to policy frameworks, the sector can achieve both environmental and economic sustainability. Future research should explore the scalability of these practices and their adaptability in diverse geographical contexts.

The global hospitality industry is under pressure to adopt sustainable practices to reduce its environmental footprint. Green logistics, which emphasizes minimizing waste, optimizing transportation, and utilizing renewable resources, is a key component of this transition. This narrative review synthesizes insights from recent studies to provide a comprehensive understanding of green logistics in the hospitality sector.

The study by Strigul (2024) highlights the critical role of logistics planning in enhancing the efficiency of hotel and restaurant services. The paper identifies logistics as a tool for stimulating recovery in the hospitality industry post-COVID-19 and stresses its importance for meeting sustainability goals. Strigul, L. (2024).

A report by Cleantech Piemonte (2024) explores how green supply chain practices can drive sustainability in the hospitality sector. The research emphasizes the importance of government policies in fostering green logistics, with examples from the Cleantech initiatives in Italy, Cleantech Piemonte. (2024).

Research by Shen et al. (2024) investigates adaptive strategies in outdoor recreational facilities during COVID-19, with a focus on "green" aesthetic qualities and logistics. Their work provides insights into how the pandemic has influenced logistical planning in hospitality, emphasizing green space optimization. Nguyen (2024) discusses the integration of green logistics in waste management within hotels and resorts. The study underscores the importance of digital technologies and data analytics in optimizing waste collection and processing. Green logistics has become an increasingly important concept in the hospitality industry as businesses aim to align with sustainability principles while maintaining operational efficiency. This review explores the integration of green logistics in hospitality, focusing on sustainable supply chain practices, waste management, energy efficiency, and customer engagement.

The quality of hotel services represents one of the main topics analyzed in the field, with most hotels striving not only to diversify the range of services offered to clients but also to make progress in terms of the quality of their performance. This aims to build customer loyalty and cope with fierce competition. By collaborating between countries and establishing standards and evaluation criteria for hotel structures and the quality of services provided within them—criteria that can be adapted and implemented across an increasing number of countries—significant contributions can be made to the unprecedented development of the hotel industry and to meeting the expectations of visitors, particularly international tourists. The creation of a homogeneous system for classifying accommodation units will

be an essential step, enabling some countries to advance further in the hotel sector, to progress in order to meet fierce competition, to comply with international standards, and to diversify their offerings.

Analyzing these aspects, we emphasized that marketing involves a very complex process, and the creation, planning, and implementation of marketing strategies require a thorough analysis of a wide range of factors. Only through such meticulous analysis can a marketing strategy be effectively applied, and these activities demand the efforts of a specialized department in the field. However, it is evident that "hotels do not always have the financial capacity and human resources to invest in marketing departments capable of developing well-defined marketing strategies, which can make them vulnerable to competition, considering the capacity of large hotel chains" [19, p. 100]. This phenomenon can be observed in various hotels, both in the Republic of Moldova and globally.

Often, smaller hotels are assimilated by large hotel chains or cease operations due to their inability to compete, a phenomenon commonly encountered internationally but less pronounced in the Republic of Moldova. Despite this, it is necessary to acknowledge that the hotel services sector in Moldova requires a strategic approach aimed at increasing the visibility of national hotels and attracting a larger number of tourists. This has led to the adoption of a series of marketing strategies as a fundamental and crucial measure for the development of the hotel services sector.

By analyzing the measures and tools employed by the world's leading hotel chains, such as Wyndham Worldwide, Marriott International, Hilton Worldwide, Best Western Hotels, and InterContinental Hotels Group, it is evident that they implement well-defined marketing strategies. These strategies place a strong emphasis on customer engagement, employing various actions to promote their services and build customer loyalty. Examples include offering loyalty points, free airline tickets, complimentary stays, or gift cards. Examining the actions and tactics used by these companies, we identified specific strategies and policies that could be implemented in Moldovan hotels to promote the local hotel services sector.

To reach the target audience and attract as many clients as possible, hotels should utilize a variety of promotional channels, including websites, social media platforms, advertising campaigns, public relations, collaborations with travel agencies, and participation in various events.

Sustainability in the hospitality industry is transforming the way hotels operate and engage with their guests. As travelers increasingly prioritize eco-conscious choices, hotels are stepping up with innovative strategies to align with environmental and social responsibility. Energy-efficient technologies, such as LED lighting and smart room systems, are reducing carbon footprints while creating operational savings. Waste reduction efforts, like converting food waste into biogas and embracing circular economy principles, are gaining traction across the sector.

The integration of sustainable practices into guest experiences has become a hallmark of modern hospitality. From eco-friendly toiletries to green roofs and linen reuse programs, hotels are actively involving guests in their sustainability journey. Leading hotel chains like Marriott and Hilton have set benchmarks with well-defined marketing strategies that focus on customer loyalty through eco-friendly initiatives, such as offering free stays or gift cards for sustainability efforts.

Moreover, the rise of digitalization has enabled paperless operations and smart energy monitoring, further reducing environmental impact. Community involvement, through local sourcing and collaborations with artisans, has also emerged as a key aspect of sustainable hospitality. By adopting these practices, the industry not only mitigates its ecological footprint but also attracts a new generation of environmentally conscious travelers, shaping a greener future for global tourism.

Conclusion

Green logistics is a transformative approach that enables the hospitality industry to align operational efficiency with sustainability goals. By integrating environmentally friendly supply chain

practices, waste reduction strategies, and energy-efficient technologies, businesses can significantly reduce their carbon footprint while optimizing resource utilization. These efforts not only enhance environmental stewardship but also improve operational cost-efficiency, creating a competitive edge in a market that increasingly values sustainability.

Adopting green logistics practices enhances the reputation of hospitality businesses, making them more attractive to eco-conscious customers and stakeholders. Strategies such as sustainable sourcing, digitalization, and partnerships with local communities not only promote environmental sustainability but also foster customer loyalty and brand differentiation. Furthermore, these practices position businesses to better compete on a global scale, as sustainability becomes a critical factor for travelers, particularly in international markets. Through green logistics, the hospitality industry can drive long-term growth while contributing to a more sustainable future.

Bibliography:

1. Becken, S., & Dolnicar, S. (2021). Sustainable tourism and green logistics: Frameworks, innovations, and practical implications. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 29(4), 501–520. https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2021.1874229

2. Shen, X., MacDonald, M., & Logan, S. W. (2024). Adaptive strategies for outdoor recreation during a time of stress: Insights from the COVID-19 pandemic in the U.S. SAGE Open, 14(1), 85–102. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/21582440241305774

3. Strigul, L. (2024). Innovations in business planning for hotel and restaurant logistics. Visnyk Natsionalnoho Universytetu Hotel and Restaurant Services, 25(3), 45–60. https://repository.kpi.kharkov.ua/

4. Nguyen, T. H. (2024). Sustainable hotel management: Strategies for green logistics. Proceedings of the 4th International Conference on Research in Logistics, 12–25. https://books.google.com/books?id=O58DEQAAQBAJ

5. Jones, P., Hillier, D., & Comfort, D. (2016). Sustainability in the hospitality industry: Some current trends and future prospects. International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 28(5), 930–942. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-11-2014-0562