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**Oksana Ye. Pauk**, Candidate of Economic Sciences (Ph.D.), Associated Professor, Department of Hotel and Restaurant Business and Food Technologies, Ivan Franko Lviv National University. Lviv, Ukraine.

ORCID 0009-0004-6134-2773

## **Business Planning in the Hotel and Food Service Industry: Nowadays Trends**

### **Abstract:**

The relevance of the study is determined by the profound transformation of business planning in the hotel and food service industry under the influence of digitalization, sustainability imperatives, and structurally altered consumer expectations following global and national crises. For Ukrainian hospitality enterprises operating in wartime and post-war conditions, business planning has become a critical instrument for resilience, recovery, and long-term competitiveness. The study problem lies in the inadequacy of traditional business planning models, which are largely oriented toward static financial projections and operational efficiency, to address the combined challenges of crisis-induced instability, technological transformation, sustainability requirements, and the growing dominance of the experience economy. Existing approaches insufficiently integrate these factors into a coherent strategic framework adapted to the Ukrainian context. The scientific novelty of the study consists in conceptualizing business planning as a dynamic, multidimensional strategic process rather than a purely financial document. The article introduces an integrated framework based on four interrelated pillars—digital transformation, ESG principles, the experience economy, and operational agility—reflecting contemporary global trends and sector-specific realities. The subject of the study is the process of strategic business planning in hotel and restaurant enterprises under conditions of crisis, digitalization, and sustainable development. The object of the study is the modern business plan as a managerial tool for strategic adaptation and the formation of competitive advantages in the hospitality industry. The study aims to identify, systematize, and conceptually interpret key trends in business planning whose integration ensures enterprise resilience and long-term value creation. The methodological basis of the study includes systematic analysis of scientific literature, synthesis and comparison of domestic and international case studies, systematization of empirical findings, and applied strategic tools, including conceptual modeling and SWOT analysis. The study builds upon the works of leading Ukrainian scholars in hospitality management and business planning, including L. Chepurda, I. Herman, M.K. Turchyniak, O. Kurakin, O.M. Liutak, and O.V. Baula, as well as international researchers such as H.-F. Chang, J. Chen, T.-C. Wang, and C. Huang. The essence of the research lies in substantiating a shift from traditional, rigid planning models toward an adaptive strategic roadmap capable of responding to uncertainty, resource constraints, and evolving market demands. The proposed framework demonstrates how the integration of digital ecosystems, sustainability-oriented governance, experience-based value propositions, and flexible operational models enhances business resilience. Special attention is given to the applicability of these approaches within the Ukrainian hospitality sector under conditions of recovery and transformation. The study concludes that a successful modern business plan for hotel and food service enterprises must function as a hybrid strategic document that simultaneously addresses immediate crisis challenges and lays the foundation for sustainable, technologically advanced, and socially responsible development, thereby contributing to the long-term recovery of the national economy.

**Keywords:** business-plan, hotel business, food industry, digitalization, sustainability, business model.

**Abbreviations:**

*BPM* is business process management,

*ESG* is Environmental, Social, and Governance,

*PMS* are Property Management Systems,

*USP* is unique selling proposition.

**Introduction**

The relevance of the study is determined by the profound transformation of the operating conditions of the hotel and restaurant industry in Ukraine under the influence of a combination of crisis factors, including wartime destruction, changes in tourism flows, resource scarcity, increased safety requirements, and heightened expectations regarding service quality, alongside accelerated digitalization and the global shift toward sustainable development principles. Under these conditions, traditional business planning models, primarily focused on financial calculations and operational efficiency, prove insufficient to ensure the resilience and competitiveness of hospitality enterprises. Additional relevance stems from the need to synchronize national economic recovery processes with global trends in the hospitality industry, including digital transformation, ESG-oriented management, the development of the experience economy, and the formation of adaptive business models. For Ukrainian hotel and restaurant enterprises, business planning is becoming not only a tool for attracting investment but also a strategic mechanism for survival, recovery, and long-term development in an environment of high uncertainty.

The study problem lies in the growing gap between established theoretical and methodological approaches to business planning in the hotel and restaurant sector and the actual conditions under which enterprises operate in the contemporary crisis and post-crisis environment. Existing business plan models generally fail to adequately account for the combined impact of digital technologies, sustainability requirements, transformed consumer behavior, and the need for high operational flexibility. A particular challenge concerns the adaptation of global managerial and technological solutions to the Ukrainian context, which is characterized by infrastructure constraints, labor shortages, migration processes, and elevated risk levels. Insufficient attention has been paid to issues of investment prioritization between basic security needs, infrastructure recovery, and strategic investments in digitalization and sustainability, as well as to the problem of evaluating the effectiveness of intangible factors—such as customer experience, social responsibility, and reputational capital—within the structure of a business plan.

The scientific novelty of the study lies in the conceptualization of business planning in the hotel and restaurant industry as a dynamic strategic instrument rather than a static financial and economic document. The article proposes an integrative approach based on the identification of four interrelated pillars of a modern business plan: digital transformation, ESG principles, the experience economy, and operational agility. Novelty is also reflected in the systematization of contemporary trends with explicit consideration of the specifics of the Ukrainian market and the conditions of wartime and post-war recovery. The study advances the interpretation of the business plan as an adaptive strategic roadmap that incorporates scenario planning, sensitivity analysis, and mechanisms for rapid business model transformation, thereby expanding traditional views on the structure and functions of business planning in the hospitality sector.

The subject of the study is the process of strategic business planning for hotel and restaurant enterprises under conditions of digitalization, sustainable development, and crisis-induced instability, with a focus on managerial decision-making, adaptation mechanisms, and the formation of competitive advantages.

The object of the study is the process of developing a business plan for hotel and restaurant enterprises in the modern environment.

The study aims to form the conceptual foundations for business planning that meet contemporary challenges and opportunities.

To achieve this, the following objectives are set:

- analyze dominant global trends and their applicability to the Ukrainian context;
- identify key structural components of a modern business plan for the HoReCa sector;
- assess the role of technological and sustainable solutions in ensuring long-term viability.

The target audience of the study includes managers and owners of hotel and restaurant enterprises, investors and entrepreneurs involved in recovery and development projects within Ukraine's hospitality industry, as well as specialists in strategic management and business planning. In addition, the article is of interest to researchers, educators, and students in economics and management, as well as to experts from public administration bodies and professional associations engaged in the development of the tourism and hotel and restaurant sectors.

### **Methods**

The methodological framework of this study is based on a comprehensive analysis of scientific publications, analytical reports, and practical case studies, employing methods of synthesis, comparison, and systematization. The selected methods ensure a holistic examination of contemporary business planning transformations in the hotel and food service industry, particularly under conditions of crisis, digitalization, and post-war recovery. The methodological approach is aligned with the objectives of identifying, structuring, and analytically interpreting key trends shaping modern business planning practices.

The method of analysis was applied to decompose contemporary business planning practices into their key structural and functional components. Within the study, analytical procedures were used to examine individual elements of modern business plans—such as digital infrastructure, sustainability initiatives, experiential value propositions, and operational flexibility—as presented in the Results. This allowed for the identification of internal linkages between technological, economic, and organizational factors influencing enterprise resilience.

Synthesis was employed to integrate fragmented findings from diverse academic sources, industry reports, and case studies into a coherent conceptual framework. In the context of the Results section, synthesis enabled the consolidation of identified trends into a unified four-pillar model of modern business planning, reflecting the interdependence of digital transformation, ESG principles, the experience economy, and adaptive operational models.

The comparative method was used to contrast traditional business planning models with contemporary approaches emerging in the hospitality industry. This method was applied to compare pre-crisis planning paradigms focused on operational efficiency with modern models emphasizing adaptability, customer experience, and sustainability. Comparative analysis also supported the evaluation of global hospitality trends in relation to the specific conditions of the Ukrainian hotel and restaurant sector.

Systematization was applied to organize heterogeneous empirical and theoretical materials into a structured analytical sequence. Through this method, diverse planning tools, managerial practices, and strategic priorities were classified and logically arranged, forming the basis for the structured presentation of results and the development of the SWOT analysis of the four-pillar framework.

A structured review of international and Ukrainian scholarly literature was conducted to identify dominant research directions in hospitality management, strategic planning, and business model innovation. Secondary data analysis enabled the extraction of relevant theoretical constructs and empirical findings, which informed the interpretation of digital, sustainable, and experiential trends reflected in the Results.

The case study method was applied to examine practical examples of hotel and restaurant enterprises adapting their business planning approaches to contemporary challenges. These cases provided empirical grounding for the identification of adaptive strategies, such as digital ecosystem development, ESG integration, and experience-oriented service design, which are reflected in the four-pillar framework presented in the Results.

Conceptual modeling was used to construct an integrated analytical framework representing modern business planning in the hospitality industry. Based on synthesized empirical and theoretical insights, the model articulates the interconnections between strategic planning dimensions and demonstrates how they collectively contribute to business resilience and value creation under conditions of uncertainty.

SWOT analysis was employed as an applied strategic assessment tool to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats associated with the proposed four-pillar business planning framework. In the Results, this method facilitated a balanced evaluation of internal capabilities and external constraints, highlighting both the strategic potential and implementation risks of the integrated planning model.

### Literature Review

Contemporary research on business planning in the hotel and restaurant industry reflects a gradual but profound shift from traditional operational and financial models toward more complex, adaptive, and strategically integrated frameworks. This evolution has been driven by structural changes in consumer behavior, technological progress, sustainability imperatives, and, in the Ukrainian context, prolonged crisis conditions intensified by military conflict and economic instability. The existing body of literature can be broadly grouped into several interrelated research directions: strategic and conceptual foundations of hospitality development, business process management and organizational modeling, innovation and digital transformation, sustainability and ethical governance, and crisis-oriented adaptation of hospitality enterprises.

Early conceptual approaches to developing the hotel and restaurant sector in Ukraine emphasize the importance of strategic coherence and long-term planning at both the enterprise and sectoral levels. Milko (2019) provides a foundational contribution by outlining strategic priorities for developing the national hotel and restaurant complex, highlighting the need for coordinated state policy, infrastructure modernization, and managerial professionalization. Although Milko's work is largely framed within pre-crisis conditions, it establishes an important baseline for understanding the structural weaknesses and development asymmetries that later intensified under crisis pressures.

Expanding this strategic perspective, Bryndzia and Kulyk (2020) focus on the pragmatics of improving planning and management in the hotel and restaurant business. Their study

emphasizes the role of systematic planning, managerial accountability, and performance-oriented decision-making. However, their approach largely remains within the paradigm of incremental improvement of existing planning practices, without fully addressing the disruptive impact of digital transformation and sustainability requirements that define contemporary hospitality environments.

Chepurda et al. (2024) move beyond incrementalism by proposing a systematic conceptualization of business planning in tourism and hospitality. Their work emphasizes the need for integrative planning models that combine economic, organizational, and market dimensions. Importantly, they frame business planning not merely as a financial justification tool, but as a mechanism for aligning strategic vision with operational implementation. This conceptual shift forms a direct theoretical foundation for the present study, particularly in its emphasis on systematization and strategic coherence.

A substantial strand of literature addresses business planning through the lens of BPM and organizational modeling. Bakalo and Hryshko (2020) analyze the peculiarities of managing and modeling business processes in tourist enterprises, highlighting the importance of process optimization, standardization, and adaptability. Their findings underscore that poorly structured business processes undermine the effectiveness of strategic plans, particularly in service-oriented industries characterized by high variability and customer involvement.

Olshanskyi (2019) further develops this perspective by situating process management within modern organizational and economic concepts. He emphasizes the systemic nature of enterprise processes and argues that effective management requires the integration of planning, control, and continuous improvement mechanisms. Although his work is not hospitality-specific, its methodological implications are highly relevant for hotel and restaurant enterprises seeking to align operational flexibility with strategic objectives.

Kushniruk et al. (2023) provide one of the most context-sensitive analyses by examining business process management in the Ukrainian hotel and restaurant sector under contemporary conditions, including war-related disruptions. Their research highlights the fragility of rigid organizational structures and the necessity of adaptive process configurations. This work directly supports the argument that modern business planning must incorporate contingency mechanisms and flexible operational models, rather than relying on static forecasts.

The role of innovation and digital technologies has become central in recent hospitality research. Liutak et al. (2023) analyze innovative technologies in the international hotel industry, focusing on digital platforms, automation, and information systems as drivers of competitiveness. Their findings demonstrate that digitalization is no longer a supplementary enhancement but a foundational component of contemporary hospitality operations.

International research reinforces this conclusion. Chang et al. (2021) apply the Grey-TOPSIS method to evaluate hotel business models, demonstrating that technological integration significantly influences business performance and resilience. Their quantitative approach provides methodological support for assessing complex strategic configurations, although it does not fully address socio-cultural and experiential dimensions of hospitality value creation.

The increasing relevance of digital business modeling tools is also reflected in the dissemination of frameworks such as the Business Model Canvas. While originally designed for entrepreneurial and public organizations, the Canvas approach offers hospitality enterprises a structured way to visualize value propositions, key resources, customer relationships, and revenue streams. However, as noted in applied studies, such tools require contextual adaptation to capture the specificities of hospitality services, particularly in crisis-prone environments.

Sustainability has emerged as a dominant theme in hospitality research, increasingly integrated into strategic planning and business model design. Wang et al. (2021) focus on sustainable hotel business models and propose weighted indicators for predicting their success. Their study highlights the growing importance of environmental responsibility, social engagement, and governance mechanisms as determinants of long-term competitiveness.

In the Ukrainian context, sustainability intersects closely with ethical considerations and social responsibility. The author (Pauk, 2025) examines business ethics in the context of business planning for hospitality and food enterprises, emphasizing conflictological aspects and stakeholder tensions. This work underscores that ethical governance is not merely a normative requirement but a practical factor influencing organizational stability, employee motivation, and public trust.

Brykova (2023) situates sustainability within the broader framework of crisis and post-war development, analyzing industry trends under conditions of systemic disruption. Her findings suggest that sustainability-oriented strategies are particularly relevant in post-crisis recovery, as they enable enterprises to rebuild legitimacy, attract investment, and align with international standards.

Several studies provide regionally focused insights into developing hospitality enterprises. Turchyniak and Forys (2021) examine the development of restaurant enterprises in Western Ukraine, identifying regional market characteristics, demand structures, and operational constraints. Their research highlights the heterogeneity of the Ukrainian hospitality market and the need for context-sensitive planning approaches.

Krukivska (2022) contributes to this discourse by analyzing organizational and economic principles of service management at the enterprise level. She emphasizes the role of human capital, service culture, and employee competencies as critical factors in hospitality performance. This focus on personnel as carriers of hospitality values reinforces the argument that business planning must extend beyond financial and technological dimensions to include human and cultural factors.

Despite the breadth of existing research, the literature reveals several unresolved issues. First, many studies address individual dimensions of business planning—such as processes, technologies, or sustainability—in isolation, without sufficiently exploring their interdependencies. Second, while crisis-related challenges are increasingly acknowledged, there remains a lack of integrative frameworks that translate these challenges into coherent business planning models.

Moreover, much of the literature remains descriptive or diagnostic, offering valuable insights into trends and problems but providing limited guidance on how to structurally integrate digital transformation, sustainability, experiential value creation, and operational agility within a single planning framework. This gap is particularly evident in the Ukrainian context, where enterprises face simultaneous pressures of reconstruction, modernization, and global integration.

The study addresses these gaps by synthesizing insights from strategic management, business process modeling, innovation studies, and sustainability research into a unified analytical framework. By conceptualizing business planning as a dynamic and adaptive strategic roadmap, the study advances existing scholarship and contributes to developing practically applicable planning models for the hotel and restaurant industry under conditions of uncertainty and transformation.

## Results

The results of the conducted analyses highlight a fundamental shift: traditional business planning models in the hotel and restaurant industry are no longer sufficient. Strategies focused solely on operational efficiency and classical marketing are proving fragile in the face of digital acceleration, climate urgency, and transformed consumer expectations. Resilience and growth are now built on a new architectural blueprint, defined by four deeply interconnected pillars which are below.

### ***The Digital Transformation Imperative: From Infrastructure to Ecosystem***

The post-pandemic period and the demands of wartime resilience have accelerated the adoption of digital tools from a discretionary advantage to a fundamental operational necessity. In the Ukrainian context, this includes not only standard contactless solutions (online bookings, digital menus, QR-code payments) but also technologies ensuring security and communication: mobile alert systems, digital document management for remote operations, and online platforms for staff coordination. Cloud-based PMS and restaurant management software enable real-time data analysis, which is essential for dynamic pricing and inventory management in volatile conditions. Furthermore, leveraging social media and digital marketing is crucial for reaching both domestic audiences and shaping the future image of enterprises for international tourists.

*Thus*, a contemporary business plan must articulate a clear “digital stack” strategy. It should justify investments in specific technologies not as costs but as enablers of operational efficiency, cost control, enhanced safety, and direct guest communication. For Ukrainian enterprises, this digital layer is also a critical tool for business continuity, allowing for remote management and rapid adaptation to changing circumstances, thereby forming the backbone of a resilient operational model.

### ***Sustainability and Social Responsibility as Drivers of Value and Resilience***

Modern business planning increasingly treats ESG principles not as a separate section but as a cross-cutting philosophy integrated into all aspects of operations. For Ukraine, the “E” (environmental) aspect involves planning for energy independence (investments in generators and solar panels), efficient resource management (water purification, waste sorting), and the use of local, seasonal products in F&B, which simultaneously supports the local economy. The “S” (social) component gains paramount importance: creating safe jobs, investing in staff training and psychological support, and actively engaging with and supporting the local community become central to the brand’s mission and value proposition.

*Thus*, the business plan must reframe sustainability from a marketing tactic into a core element of risk management and value creation. Financial projections should include calculations for investments in green technologies and their payback period. The marketing strategy should be built around a transparent narrative of social contribution and responsible operation, which resonates strongly with both domestic consumers and future international visitors seeking meaningful travel, thereby building long-term brand loyalty and operational resilience.

### ***The Dominance of the Experience Economy and Hyper-Personalization***

Today’s consumer, both local and international, seeks not just a service but a memorable, authentic, and personalized experience. This trend necessitates a shift in business planning from selling rooms and meals to curating emotions and stories. For the Ukrainian market, this means creating unique offerings rooted in local culture, history, and craftsmanship: themed culinary workshops, partnerships with local artisans, or immersive historical tours. Personalization,

powered by data analytics from CRM systems, allows for tailoring offers (special welcome amenities, personalized recommendations) that make guests feel valued. The concept of “phygital” spaces—where the physical environment is enhanced by digital interactivity—also offers new avenues for engagement.

*Thus*, the core of a competitive business plan lies in the detailed description of the “experience concept”. This section should move beyond standard service descriptions to outline USPs based on emotional engagement. It requires planning investments in staff training for storytelling and anticipatory service, as well as in technology that enables personalization. Ultimately, the plan must demonstrate how the business will create shareable, valuable moments that translate into customer loyalty and premium pricing potential.

### ***Operational Agility and Adaptive Business Models***

The tendency of the modern world, especially pronounced in Ukraine, has made operational flexibility the most critical competitive advantage. Business planning must therefore incorporate scenarios and contingency modules. This involves designing versatile spaces that can be quickly repurposed (e.g., a conference hall becoming a coworking hub or a volunteer center), developing multi-format F&B operations (e.g., a restaurant with a bakery counter, takeaway, and delivery kitchen), and building flexible, cross-trained teams. Asset-light models, such as management contracts or franchising, as well as the exploration of hybrid formats like aparthotels, should be considered as strategies for risk distribution and rapid scaling.

The importance of these four pillars can be shown through the conducted SWOT analysis (*Table 1*).

This SWOT analysis reveals that the four-pillar framework’s greatest strength—its integrated, synergistic nature—is also its primary vulnerability, due to the complexity and resource intensity of implementation. The key to success lies not in attempting perfect execution of all pillars at once, but in strategic sequencing and authentic integration.

*Thus*, a modern business plan is not a rigid five-year forecast but a dynamic strategic roadmap. Its financial and operational sections must include sensitivity analyses, clear triggers for plan adaptation, and a focus on developing a lean, versatile operational structure. The ultimate goal is to create an enterprise capable of not just surviving disruptions but of pivoting quickly to seize new opportunities in a recovering and transforming market.

### **Discussion**

While the identified trends provide a strategic direction, their implementation in the Ukrainian context, especially during wartime recovery and reconstruction, raises complex questions requiring further professional discourse.

A primary research problem is the economic feasibility and prioritization of investments: how should a business balance urgent spending on security, energy independence, and basic reconstruction with strategic investments in digitalization and sustainability, which have longer payback horizons? Furthermore, the adaptation of global experience to local realities is nontrivial: which technological or experiential solutions are truly scalable and effective in the Ukrainian market with its specific infrastructure challenges and consumer behavior?

Another critical question concerns human capital: how to plan for staffing and training under conditions of migration and limited resources, and what new competencies will be essential for hospitality managers in the new reality? Finally, there is the problem of measuring effectiveness: what new KPIs should be introduced to evaluate the success of experiential, sustainable, and socially responsible strategies? These questions indicate the need for further

applied research, the development of local case studies, and the creation of specialized analytical tools for the Ukrainian HoReCa sector.

### Conclusion

This study confirms that business planning for the hotel and food service industry is undergoing a paradigm shift, moving from a static financial document to a dynamic, multifaceted strategic blueprint for resilience and value creation.

The results of the conducted analyses highlight four interconnected pillars for a modern plan:

1. Digital transformation as the essential operational and communicative backbone ensuring efficiency and adaptability;
2. ESG principles as a foundational philosophy that mitigates risks, builds brand capital, and ensures long-term societal license to operate;
3. The experience economy as the central axis of the value proposition, shifting competition from price and amenities to emotional connection and personal relevance; and
4. Operational agility as the key meta-competency, allowing the business to navigate uncertainty and capitalize on emerging opportunities.

In summary, for Ukrainian enterprises, a successful business plan in the current and post-war period must be a hybrid document. It must simultaneously address the acute challenges of the present (security, resource scarcity, market volatility) and lay a foundation for the future (technology, sustainability, unique experiences). The overall result of this synthesis is a call for holistic and integrated planning, where financial calculations are inextricably linked to technological and social strategies. Ultimately, a modern business plan becomes not just a tool for attracting investment, but a framework for building a responsible, resilient, and competitive hospitality business that contributes to the sustainable recovery of the national economy.

### Conflict of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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## Appendix

Table 1. SWOT-analysis of four-pillars framework

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Future-Proof Foundation	High Initial Complexity & Investment
Resilience & Adaptability	Internal Cultural Resistance
Enhanced Value Proposition	Authenticity Risk
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
Access to New Capital & Partnerships	Economic & Geopolitical Volatility
Premium Market Positioning	Accelerating Pace of Change
Data Monetization	Intense Competitive & Talent Warfare
Building National & Sector Resilience	

Source: author's own elaboration.