

G T T P

THE GLOBAL TRAVEL & TOURISM PARTNERSHIP

A BUSINESS AND EDUCATION ALLIANCE

HERITAGE TOURISM RESEARCH COMPETITION

SHAITANKA. THE SOUTH URAL MYSTERY

Students

Alexandr Tursukov
Elena Eretnova

Teacher

Ekaterina Gagarinova



G T T P Russia
Chelyabinsk, 2016



Acknowledgements

We wish to thank many people and organizations who helped and supported us in the process of design and implementation of the Heritage Tourism Project.

Our participation in GTTP Russia Innovative Ideas Contest and Research Competition 2016 provided us an opportunity to have a great experience and gain a set of relevant skills we could use throughout our lives.

We extend our huge thanks to Global Partners whose support makes possible GTTP Research Award and International Student-Teacher Conference and our attendance at this remarkable event.

And Thank You to GTTP Russia, our school, our teachers and partners, and all involved in the Project! It would not have been done without them!



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Foreword

A regular Friday evening was coming to the end. Two friends (Lena and Sasha) stretched out on the old coach and discussed leisure options for the coming weekend. Lena wanted to go hiking, but Sasha didn't share her passion for countryside walks. Sasha suggested attending a new quest-room, but Lena did not think it was a good idea. Young people continued their dispute but could not come to an agreement. In fact, Sasha would not mind enjoying a bit of sunshine, walking along the woods and admiring the beauty of Ural's nature but still he liked adventures more. And Lena, in her turn, had nothing against solving a good mystery or doing a quest. It was not for nothing that she has always chosen places associated with mysteries and legends for hiking, but still she liked outdoor activities more. Since none of the friends wanted to drop their idea they were getting annoyed with each other. And just when it seemed that they will never be able to reach an agreement suddenly a completely new idea struck them: "We need a leisure activity, which would include going to the countryside and an exciting riddle to solve"!

Introduction

The idea Sasha and Lena came up with can be seen as a blend of tourism and quests – two types of activities extremely popular and attractive for a large number of people.

A tour of a site combined with a quest based on exciting events, characters, customs and legends associated with this site can make its exploration more entertaining and appealing to people who wish to broaden and deepen their understanding of the location they live in or visit. Such people usually enjoy **heritage tourism – a branch of tourism oriented towards historic, cultural and natural heritage with a distinctive authenticity or sense of place.**

Heritage tourism is based upon the concept that each place has a story to tell. Those authentic stories of the current and previous generations are what distinguish one place from others and make each place unique and special. Rather than simply visiting heritage sites heritage tourism offer experience of unique authentic customs, traditions, arts, history, culture and nature making them come alive for residents and visitors.

Learning more about heritage tourism through research two friends were inspired to continue working on the idea of enriching tours with quests and exploring opportunities and potential of leveraging heritage recourses and raising effectiveness of popularization of the heritage tourism in the South Urals and Chelyabinsk Region.



Our Home – Chelyabinsk Region

Situated on the borders of Europe and Asia and of the Urals and Siberia Chelyabinsk Region is undoubtedly and primarily an industrial area. That however does not mean it lacks significant and very specific historic, cultural and natural heritage resources to value and preserve, to be proud with and attract tourists.



The boundary between two continents, Europe and Asia is marked by a stone pillar which has "Europe" written on one side and "Asia" on the other.



Chelyabinsk region is situated on the South Urals which belongs to the Ural Mountains - the home of mighty rivers, thick forests and soaring mountains.

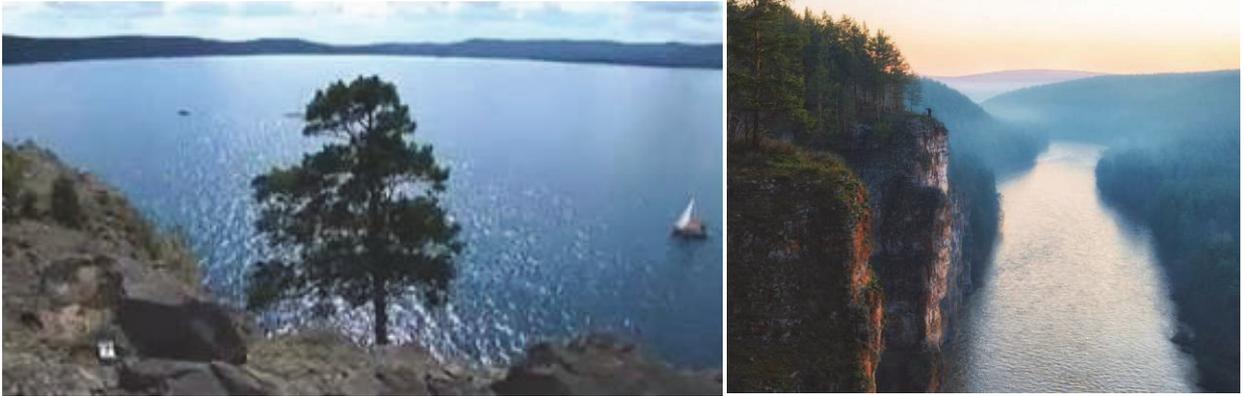
The region is located on the border of the Ural Mountains and Siberia and since the construction at the turn of the 19th-20th centuries of the Trans-Siberian Railway Chelyabinsk has gained an informal honorary title of “the Gateway to Siberia.”



The geographic location and variety of natural landscapes give the area its unique shape. It is possible to find here all natural-landscape zones of Russia, including tundra and forest-tundra, taiga, mixed and broad-leaved forests, forest-steppe, steppe and semi-desert.

The relief is complex with numerous valleys and mountain ridges.

Geographers consider the South Urals as “lake-land”, as there are more than three thousand lakes.



Factories and railroads transect this landscape which is dotted with historic sites and natural phenomena.



All this makes the area’s historic, cultural and historic heritage diverse and interesting to experience

Heritage Highlights

Among the best known regional heritage highlights are:

- Famous archaeological complex "Arkaim" founded about 2000 years BC and spread out over 350 square kilometers. Discovered in 1987 it is known as the “Russian Stonehenge”



- Kesene’s Mausoleum or Tamerlane Tower - a medieval Muslim architecture monument originated in the 14th century

founded an industrial empire in the Urals in the 18th century

- Demidov’s residence – a home to a dynastic family that



- Ilmensky Nature Reserve - a mineralogical paradise, where a gem boom has been going on for over a century

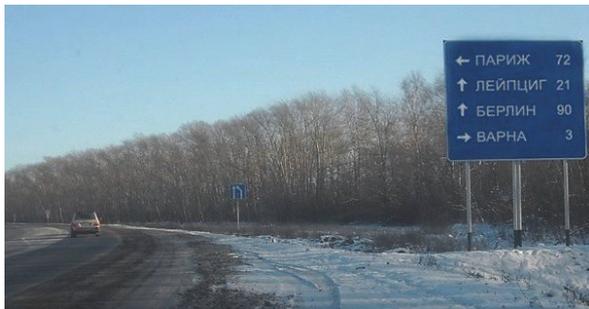


- Lake Turgoyak called “the Ural Baikal” because of the purity and of the particular taste of its water

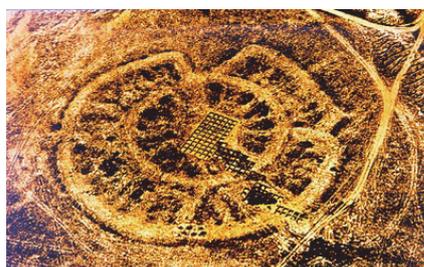
- And many other objects such as fortresses, unique temples, old factories, unusual mountains, caves and beautiful lakes.



Another example of unique heritage in Chelyabinsk region is a set of villages that bear European names like Paris and Berlin in honor of the Russian victories in Germany and France in the campaigns of 1799 and from 1813-1814. Orthodox Cossack regiments returning from battlefields named these settlements which are now not just symbols of military pride, but also fascinating places to visit and see Russia’s biggest and most accurate replica of the Eiffel Tower that serves as a telephone mast, or the local version of the Berlin Wall which divided the German capital for nearly 30 years.



In addition Chelyabinsk region keeps the whole host of anomalous zones as well as constructions and phenomena of mysterious origins associated with exciting events and legends extremely attractive for scientists, ufologists and tourists.



The most famous event is certainly the Chelyabinsk meteor – a super bright meteor that exploded on February 15th 2013 above Chelyabinsk at a height of 20 kilometers, releasing 500 kilotons of energy and about five tons of meteoritic material that reached the ground, including a 650 kilograms meteorite that was recovered by divers from the bottom of Lake Chebarkul.



All this makes Chelyabinsk region heritage diverse and interesting to experience. However apart from the popular heritage highlights there are plenty of far less known, but not less fascinating heritage sites which are not frequently visited by local people, not to mention travelers who explore better promoted or more conveniently located attractions.

Promotion and preservation of such authentic places could help avoid their oblivion and destruction and see them through “new eyes”. Sasha and Lena decided to research such little-known places which can be rediscovered and exploit by means of heritage tour quests increasing their sustainability.

“The Golden Belt of the Ural Mountains”

It should be noted that the team found out that their plan perfectly matches creation of Chelyabinsk region cluster “The Golden Belt of the Ural Mountains” - a tourism-related investment project ranked among the top three within the State Program for Development of Domestic and Inbound tourism in Russia (Chelyabinsk region’s project received 88 scores out of possible 100). The tourist cluster that reflects the Law "On cultural heritage" of Chelyabinsk region issued 28.10.2004 has become an important component and one of the drivers for Strategy for Regional Development until 2020.



“The Golden Belt of the Ural Mountains” aims at creation of heritage reserves on the concept of intertwining of natural, historic and cultural elements and includes improvement of access to heritage sites, transport, infrastructure, communication and education.

The project includes the most popular attractions in Chelyabinsk region, such as:

- Taganai National Park
- Banks of Ai river
- Nurgush mountain
- Laklinskaya cave
- Ilmen national reserve
- Zyuratkul national park
- and several more popular sites





Sasha and Lena thought that this list can be extended by including less known and promoted places which never-the-less are an integral part of Chelyabinsk region rich natural, cultural and historic heritage. These unusual and exotic heritage objects are authentic and especially important in rural settings to care for and share with local people and travelers. Their preservation and promotion by means of the heritage tourism could help avoid their oblivion and destruction.



Shaitanka Lake

In order to test feasibility of this idea the team had to choose a suitable site for a pilot project. Two friends explored a lot of places searching for the most interesting one. And finally they found what they have been looking for. **Shaitanka Lake** was the best option: it was a place with specific nature and history elements, diversified flora and fauna, exciting stories and relatively easy access.



Shaitanka Lake is lost in the woodland of Chelyabinsk region, near the Uk village. It is a large crater with the diameter of almost 100 meters, filled with black water connected with a giant underground water system. The depth of the reservoir is approximately 200 meters. But it may be the lake has more than one bottom. Local people believe that Shaitanka Lake is bottomless. Anyway it is the deepest karst lake in Chelyabinsk region.



This unique nature object is also noteworthy for more mysterious reasons. For example Shaitanka's water can "boil" and "bubble" due to unexplainable reason, as well as spill over the lake shores flooding the surroundings. In old times such phenomena were attributed to evil spirits. This explains the origin of the lake's ominous name: "Shaitan" is concordant with "Satan" which means "devil" in the Turk language.

Residents of the Uk village tell a lot of stories connected with this place. Some people say that there used to be a settlement near the lake, which was suddenly swallowed up by the water of Shaitanka. Other people refer to a cruel band, which used to rob locals and travelers and covered up traces and treasures in the lake.

According to another story in Shaitanka Lake depths dwells a kind of a "monster" – a relative of the Loch Ness Nessie perhaps? And one more story assigns the lake frequent UFO sightings

And while Shaitanka Lake is full of mystery and mysticism, it is also a splendid place to observe rare birds and animals listed in the Red Book. They include: garden dormouse, fire-bellied toad, hawk owl, as well as rare plants Sphagnum contortum and Hericium coralloides.



Last, but not least, Shaitanka Lake presented a perfect opportunity to satisfy both team members' tastes. Lena insisted that she wanted to explore the surroundings and see rare species of animals and plants, while Sasha was keen to unravel the mysteries of Shaitanka Lake.

Currently only few people visit Shaitanka Lake because the area is small and there are no special places of interest nearby, which does not make it attractive for tourists. However the mixture of unique nature and enthralling authentic stories specific for the local setting makes Shaitanka Lake a perfect spot for heritage tourist quests. They are keys to draw residents and visitors who like adventures and value history and natural environment.

The territory of the lake and its surroundings is not preserved. The access to the site is free; consequently, in pursuance of the legislation, there are no restrictions for development and implementation of activities related to organizing tourist quests.

Conducted research provided arguments to believe that Shaitanka Lake has a potential of an exciting heritage destination.

Tourism Market Analysis

The current tourism market trend in Chelyabinsk region demonstrates an increase of the number of people who choose domestic tourism and prefer adventures and exploration of unusual and sometimes hard-to-reach places and objects. People are choosing to stay closer to home and spend less, yet they still are keen to experience something new and different.



Heritage tourism providing opportunities to experience unique authentic places and activities associated with the events and stories of the past and present is potentially very attractive for such category of tourists.

Market analysis showed that there are about 25 travel agencies aimed at the regional tourism in Chelyabinsk region. The average prices and duration of tours offered by the largest travel agencies are presented below.

Company	Price, rub.	Amount of days
Versina-Tour	4100	2
Rus-Travel	2590	2
Turgid	3700	2
Sputnik	3700	2
Holiday Tour	3250	2

Further research revealed that none of presented companies' services included quests. The team also noted that Chelyabinsk region has a surprisingly small amount of companies that specialize on the heritage tourism, and that even those few companies who offer heritage tourism are not particularly popular especially among young people.

The team concluded that heritage tourism proposal currently has little appeal to potential customers and made an assumption that customers, especially younger, might lack information about heritage topics and what is available in the local areas on the one hand, and expect to experience something more unusual and exciting attributed to heritage sites or events on the other hand.

The team assumed that better information and promotion of heritage sites and customized approach to heritage tours can improve the current situation.

Two friends were even more inspired by the results of their research. After all, Shaitanka Lake project was designed to provide visitors a unique and authentic heritage tour experience enriched by outdoor quests and that distinguished the project from the competition.

Quests Market Analysis

Why have quests become so popular? According to QuestMe.ru, quests fans have identified the following benefits:

Sasha, an experienced participant of quests, knows the most popular companies in Chelyabinsk. Quest



companies usually offer 1-hour long quests for 2 to 4 players. After a short Internet browsing two friends found prices charged by each company for their services. The data is given below.

Company	Cost per hour, rubles
Rabbit hole	2000
Chelbunker	1200
Klassniy Kvest	1200
Delta	1500
Puzzle	2000
VPautine	2000
Reddoor	1500
Klaustrofobia	2000

Sasha identified a number of disadvantages of existing quest rooms, namely:

- Uniformity of tasks
- Limited duration of games - one hour is not enough to dip into the atmosphere of the quest
- Confined area limits players' fantasy
- Games are impersonal, mass, it is impossible to use personal knowledge

The team assumed that outdoor quests will lack many of the above-mentioned disadvantages of the quest-rooms. They provide more time and experiences to more people and for a better price than competitors and offer excellent opportunities to learn about the local heritage sites and events through participatory activities and communication with people of similar interests.

SWOT Analysis

Further research included SWOT Analysis which revealed the following

Tourism SWOT Analysis

<div style="text-align: center;">S</div> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Strengths</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A new brand and market niche ✓ Novelty & excitement of a new tourist product alternative to traditionally guided heritage tours ✓ Unique nature and historic site off the beaten tracks ✓ Support and appreciation of the local residents (Uk settlement) 	<div style="text-align: center;">W</div> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Absence of smooth-running customer attraction channels ✓ Seasonality of demand and supply ✓ Costs associated to purchase of expensive tourist outfit ✓ Limited engagement of team members in implementation of the concept
<div style="text-align: center;">T</div> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Threats</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Competitors may follow the project idea ✓ High degree of volatility of customers' demand ✓ Stricter regulations and control concerning organization of outdoor activities 	<div style="text-align: center;">O</div> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 18% growth of the domestic tourism in the RF in 2015. ✓ Federal target program "Development of Domestic and Incoming Tourism in the Russian Federation for 2011-2018" ✓ Growing popularity of short-term tour itineraries ✓ Differentiation of tourist products

Quests SWOT Analysis

<p>S Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Vast quest experience of the project organizers ✓ Unique authentic features and stories associated with the selected heritage site ✓ No need for major financial investments ✓ vk.com group to promote the chosen concept through social networks 	<p>W Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Single-use product ✓ Need for constant modifications of quests ✓ Short product life cycle (1-1,5 years) ✓ Limited engagement of team members in implementation of the concept
<p>T Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ High level of competition (currently, there are about 950 quest rooms opened in Russia and 170 more will be opened in the near future) ✓ Greater consumer expectation and service demand related to quests props quality, complexity and sophistication 	<p>O Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ New type of leisure (appeared in Russia since 2013) ✓ High growth rates of the quest market ✓ Low entry ✓ Expanding market segments and target markets (introduction of skill building quests, such as teambuilding or leadership etc.) ✓ Trend towards increase of the quest technological effectiveness

Consumer Analysis

- *Sasha, who usually goes to quest-rooms?*

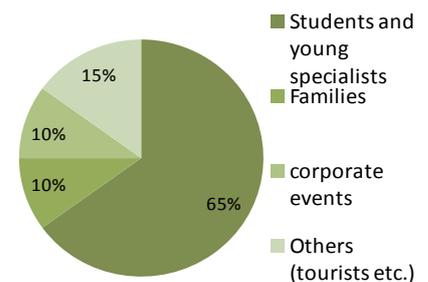
Sasha was pleased that Lena was finally interested in his hobby and explained that quest-rooms are predominantly attended by university students and recent graduates.

- *Wow! The youth in the region are interested in tourism too!*

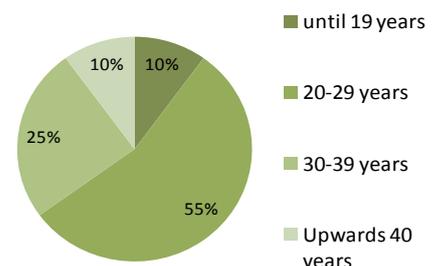
Friends decided to make sure that both target groups (tourists and quests fans) will be interested in participation in tourist quests. They conducted a survey, and you can see their findings.

Polling conducted within the group of the South Ural State University and Chelyabinsk newsgroup of the online social network "Vkontakte" showed that over 85% of participants were interested in visiting Shaitanka Lake.

Target audience



Average age of participants



Through potential customers analysis the team was able to find out that the majority of representatives of both market segments (tourists and quests fans) of similar income, age and interests were inclined to experience a new type of activities related to heritage tourism.

Also the typical customers were identified – they were young people - university students and recent graduates -young professionals, aged up to 29 years, of middle average income level, who prefer to spend weekends outdoors and are keen on new and unusual experiences and adventures

According to survey results, the idea of introduction heritage sites through tourist quests was appreciated by respondents. The team was happy and proud to be the first in Chelyabinsk region to offer this service to customers.

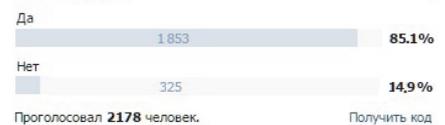


ТИПИЧНЫЙ ЧЕЛЯБИНСК

Друзья, хочу представить вам новый вид отдыха: квесты с туристической направленностью на озере Шайтанка! Вам больше не придётся бродить по душным коннатам в поиске разгадок, ведь теперь в Вашем распоряжении огромное пространство в лесу, которое явно не заставит скучать Вашу фантазию! Путешествие в мир загадок займёт больше суток, так что вы на 100% почувствуете себя детективом! Проживание в комфортных палатках, байки у костра, питание и неповторимая атмосфера мистики обеспечена! Первое время действует обширная система скидок и розыгрышей путёвок, не упустите свой шанс! Билет стоит 2000 рублей, уверен, вы не пожалеете!



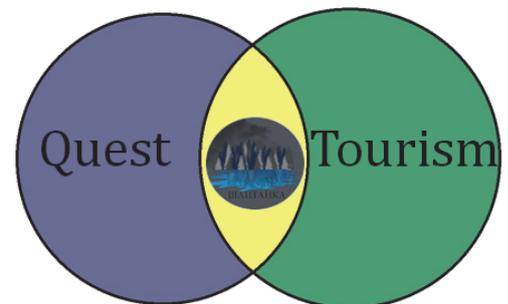
Готовы ли вы посетить данное мероприятие? Открытое голосование



Отметка на карте
Иглинский район

Our Heritage Tourism Project

The idea of the project is based on combination of two popular trends: quests and tourism in order to develop an authentic local heritage attraction that features unique natural resources associated with mysterious phenomena and legends.



It is planned to organize:

- Tours & Quests on Shaitanka Lake
- Introduction to unique natural resources
- Introduction to local legends and mystical phenomena (Monster of Shaitanka, black fog, the hidden treasures etc.)

Tour scenarios and quests will be developed with consideration of age groups, physical abilities and preferences of the potential customers. For example children will be engaged in educational, orienteering and natural history research quests. Adults might prefer detective or mystical quests, maybe even with horror elements. Quests for young active people keen on adventures or extreme sports will reflect their preferences as well. So everyone will find activities to their liking.

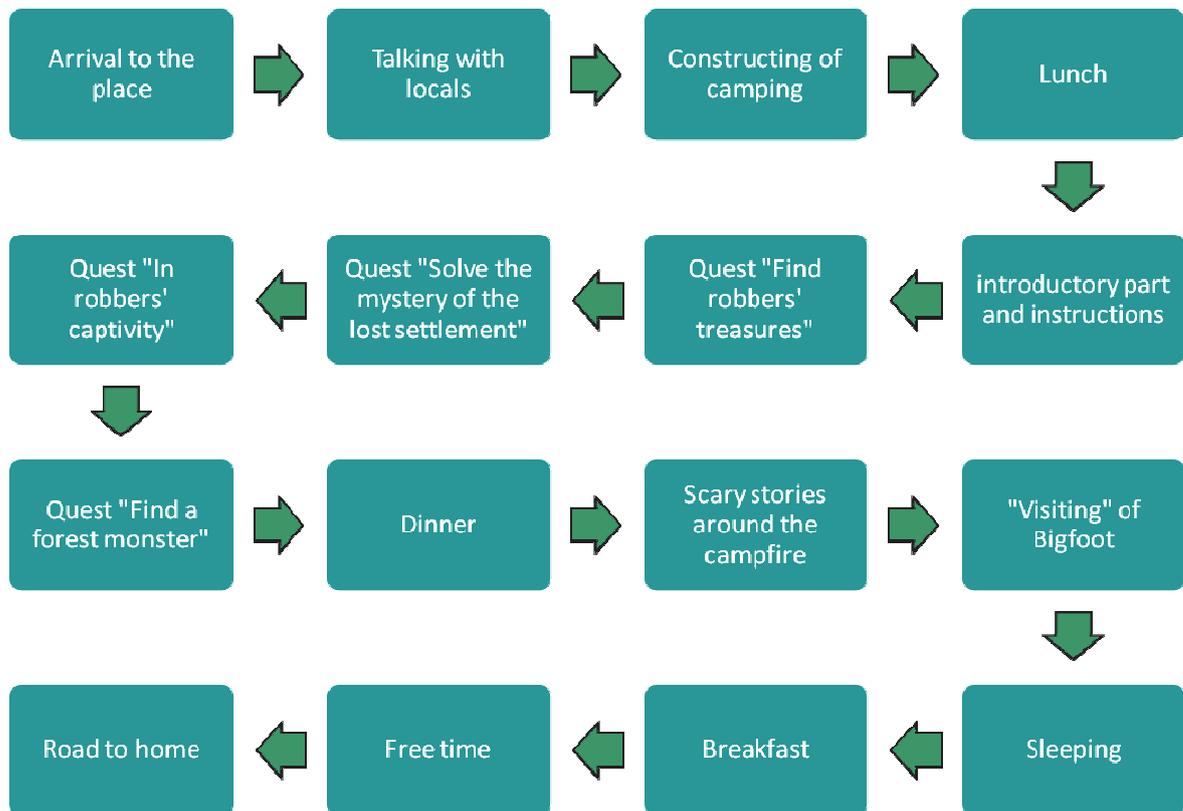
During the first pilot year of project implementation the team plans to launch 3 types of quests:

- Quests based on local legends and historic facts: *Mystery of Shaitanka. Legend or reality?* (quest based on stories of residents of the Uk village)
- Mystic quests with horror elements: *Shaitanka. Where does infernal beast hide?* (quest with elements of horror for adult visitors)
- Educational quests aimed at studying the South Ural soils, minerals and plants and animal species: *Shaitanka. All natural treasures of the Urals* (quest based on the unique natural features of Shaitanka lake)



Each tour scenario and related quest contains historic part, environmental part, mysterious stories and communication between visitors and residents of the Uk village.

Here you can see the plan for heritage tour quest *Shaitanka. Where does infernal beast hide?*



Economic Rationale

After a couple of cups of strong coffee the team took up the most interesting - economical component of the project.

One of the tasks was to determine the price policy of the project. In order to reach the target market segment, it was decided to focus on the lower average price. The typical consumers of the new unique product are people aged up to 29 years, students or recent graduates, who wish to have a good time in a good company, and city residents,

interested in unusual experience. The affordable price for leisure experience for such customers is 2000 rubles.

For successful implementation of the project the team had to take into account the following costs:

Name	Value, rub.
Investment costs	
Area environmental cleaning	30 000
Double tents (18 pcs.)	54 000
Sleeping bags (18 pcs.)	30 600
Touristic chairs (18 pcs.)	9 000
Quests props	15 000
Camping Equipment (lanterns, flint etc.)	7 000
Flippers (2 pcs.)	8 000
Diving masks (2 pcs.)	4 000
In total	157 600
Pre-operating costs (for the 1st month)	
Bus rent	36 000
Food	6 400
In total	42 400
In total	200 000

Now let's consider for what a person pays 2000 rubles, apart from a fascinating heritage journey into the world of natural wonders and mysterious legends.

Item cost	Price, rub.
Bus rent	600
Sleeping area	300
Food	400
Guide's offers	100
Organizers' profit	600
In total	2 000

As you can see from the table, the profit per person equals to 600 rubles, so the total profit from organization of one trip equals to 9000 rubles.

Friends were exhausted and excited with their calculations and had a quick nap dreaming of Shaitanka Lake bright future which included residents and visitors attending heritage tour quests, groups of young historians, archeologists, geologists and biologists exploring the area,

experts and scientists monitoring and researching Shaitanka Lake to solve its riddles, and much much more.

Project Analysis

Preparation for implementation of the pilot project won't take more than 1.5 months. You can see below stages that need to be fulfilled.

Lena and Sasha decided that they would be able to organize 26 tours to Shaitanka Lake in the hottest summer months. On average the group has to consist of no more than 15 people. Otherwise not all participants will be able to take part in quests.

Activity	2017				
	May Week 1	May Week 2	May Week 3	May Week 4	June
Environmental cleaning of the area			30 000 rub		
Purchase of equipment			127 600 rub		
Bus rental					36 000 rub
Pilot					
Purchase of food (lunch boxes)					6 400 rub
Pilot Project implementation					

Also the team has considered that in June and in September they won't be able accommodate 100% attendance: at the beginning of June they won't finish preparation for the first tour quest yet, and September weather in Chelyabinsk region is unpredictable and full of unpleasant surprises.

According to the team's plans 26 two-day outdoor heritage tours of Shaitanka Lake will be held in summer 2017 for the price of 2000 rubles or 30 Euro per person. And no less than 400 people will visit the lake in the summer months. The net reduced income should be around 150 thousand rubles or over 2000 Euro, and the payback period will be 4 months. The profitability index of 1.95 means that each invested rouble will bring 95 kopecks of profit. Thus the project can be regarded acceptable from the point of view of costs & benefits ratio.

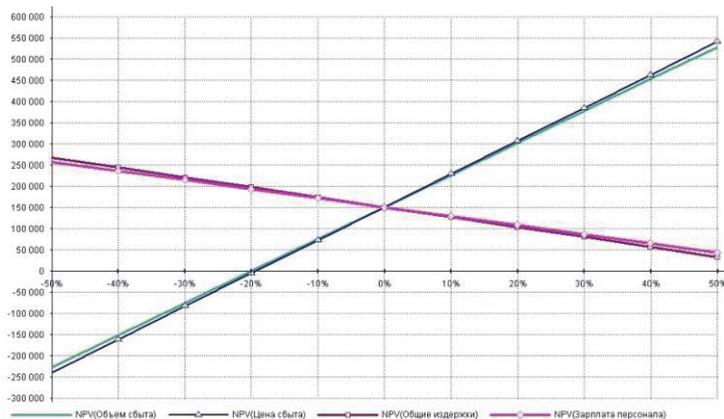
Indicator	June	July	August	September
Number of organized tour quests	4	8	8	6
Cost of participation in the tour quest per person (RUR)	2 000 (≈30 EUR)			
Number of participants	60	120	120	100
Indicator			Value	
Discounting rate, %			20	
Payback period, months			4	
Discounted payback period, months			4	
Average profitability index, %			482,45	
Net present value, (RUR)			149 845 (≈2110 EUR)	
Profitability index			1,95	

Further the team carried out a financial analysis taking into account the following parameters:

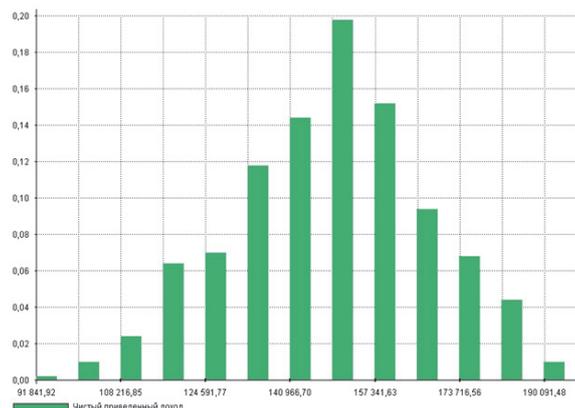
- Planning horizon of indicators of activities for the project – 5 months
- Discount rate - 20% (WACC model)

Integrated indicators of the project and results of economic risks assessment are provided.

Sensitivity analysis:



Monte Carlo risk analysis:



The economic risk assessment has shown the high rate feasibility of our project.

Although the sensitivity analysis revealed that 20% price reduction can significantly influence the expected profitability of the project, such reduction is unlikely because the suggested price of our tour quest is one of the lowest both on the tourism and quests markets.

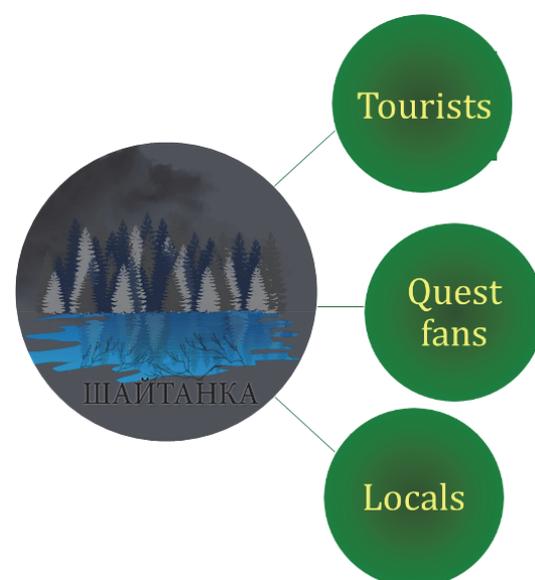
Monte Carlo analysis demonstrated 99.8% project feasibility rate and low level of probability of cash flow constraints or cash shortages.

Social Impact

Social impact estimates of the project included tourists, quest fans and residents of the neighborhood.

Tourists will enjoy organized tours of an overlooked local heritage site in a safe and comfortable way because organizers provide the entire necessary tourist outfit. Participants are offered an excellent alternative to traditionally guided heritage tours and will appreciate the novelty and uniqueness instead of sameness.

Quests fans will be provided with a good alternative to quest rooms and gain by the price/time spent ratio through outdoor tour quests based on atmospheric authentic stories related to a real heritage site.



Residents of the nearby Uk settlement will benefit through increase of pride of their birthplace and motivation to safeguard the local heritage. The project is designed to develop new work places (“story teller”, “guide” etc.) and opportunity for residents to sell own products to visitors that will increase of the living standards of the local population.

Project Advantages

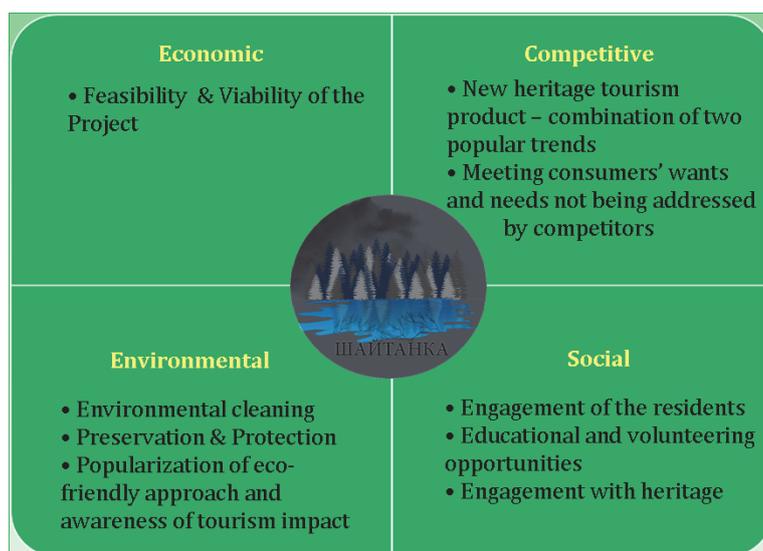
At this stage the team was prepared to identify the project advantages.

Economic estimates and risk assessment provided reliable data to confirm high level of feasibility and viability of our project.

Our project is competitive and innovative bringing to life a new heritage tourism product - a combination of two popular trends: tourism and quests that, according to market analysis and consumer survey meets consumers’ wants and needs not being addressed by competitors. We are the first to offer an integrated heritage tourism experience in our region.

Environment advantages include area cleaning, preservation and protection of the site, popularization of eco-friendly approach and raising awareness of tourism impact on sustainability.

Social advantages are represented by engagement of residents for their social and economic benefit, numerous opportunities for education as well as engagement volunteers from all walks of life, and encourage participation of those who feel less engaged with heritage.



Sustainable Development

Shaitanka Lake project has a strong potential for sustainable development because:

- ✓ Its implementation means preserving local heritage site, protecting its unique authentic character, looking after it and increasing its sustainability
- ✓ The range of services and activities is consistent with and determined by the socio-economic and environmental opportunities of the area
- ✓ Visitors will be engaged and better understand the heritage site value and tourism impact on its sustainability
- ✓ Residents will be engaged and develop a stronger sense of pride in their local heritage and motivation to safeguard its value
- ✓ Recognition of the area’s historic resources can bring about neighborhood revitalization, and improve the quality of life
- ✓ Friendly respectful relationships and interaction between providers, visitors and local population can help create a successful and sustainable destination.

Promotion & Popularization

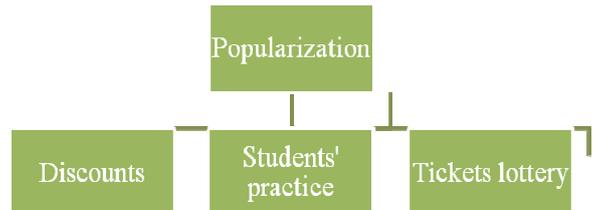
Now when you are hopefully getting more and more convinced in the team's heritage tourism project viability and positive impact, let's move on to the project promotion strategy. The team has to run an advertising campaign and promote a new tourist brand.

Lena immediately understood in which directions they had to move in terms of popularization of the project. They are presented below:

1) Giving customers discounts at the initial phase of the project to support development of the new brand.

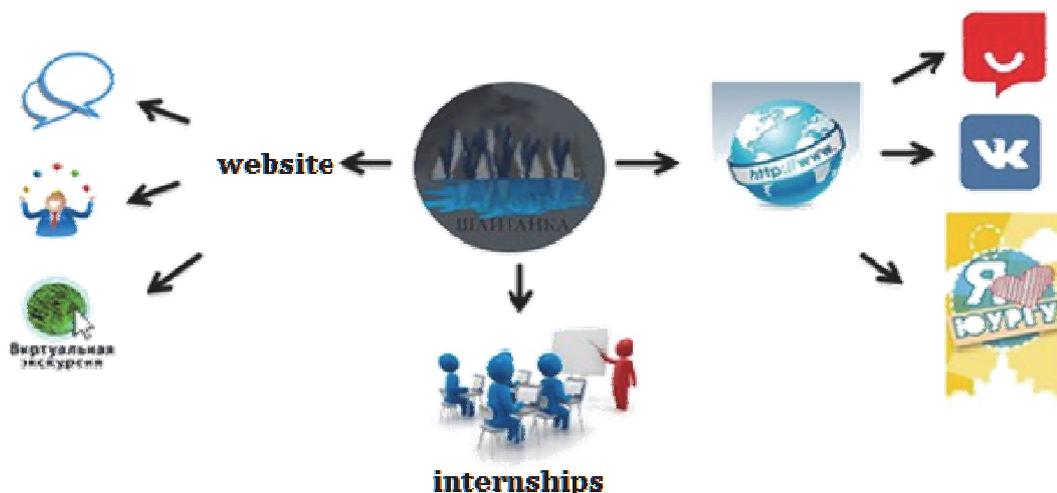
2) Recruiting guides and quest masters among students who can use this time and experience to gain new skills and credits for hands-on practice

3) Organizing ticket lottery in social networks (every 2 weeks there will be lottery for one free tour).



Because the main customers are students - active young people, who desire to experience something new and have a thirst for adventures the main way of the project promotion and popularization is through Internet, because that is where our potential customers spend the lion's share of their time, and all information is taken mostly from Internet resources.

Of huge importance will be use of technology tools for promotion (project website, blogs, and online social networks).



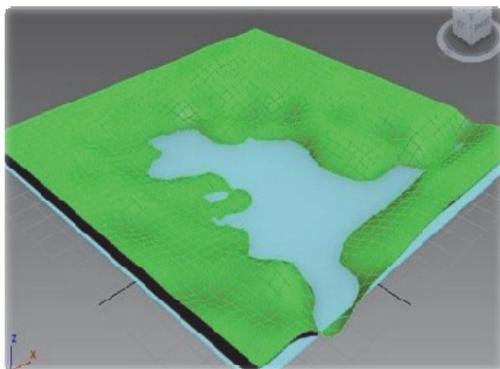
The project website will feature news, feedbacks, comments, photos and videos including a virtual tour around the lake, to impress and catch attention and interest of potential customers taking into account the age category of customers and their interests.

SEO-optimization will be carried out through the services of Yandex Direct and Google Adwords.

Based on this, the advertising should be posted on websites and social networks groups dedicated to youth, leisure and entertainment (eg, www.vibirai.ru) In social networks, we enlist the support of the local student community (eg, www.vk.com/susu4you).



The promotional strategy also included a virtual tour of the site where you can see a real 3D model of the lake and complete an online quiz.



What Has Been Done

Moving forward with the research, last July the team organized a free one-day trial tour quest of Shaitanka lake with a purpose of testing the viability of their ideas and plans.

Another reason for this activity was to establish contacts and communication with residents of the Uk settlement and discuss the project in details. Sasha and Lena were happy to find out that they were interested and enthusiastic about our plans.

We identified stories associated with Shaitanka Lake to design and fine-tune the quests, And also selected the tent camp site, as well as routes suitable for different types of the tour quests.

Photos and feedbacks from the trial tour quest participants enriched our promotion materials and campaign through website and social networks.

Getting ready for the trial tour quest friends prepared some props for the tour quest *Shaitanka. Where does infernal beast hide?*



The Bright Future

Heritage tour quests of Shaitanka Lake are designed to help preserve and pass to future generations the natural and historic heritage associated with the local site.

The project is aimed at those who are tired of sameness and seek diversity and authentic experiences or simply cannot decide how to spend a weekend. For a reasonable price customers receive an enriched integrated experience of brain and imagination workout in the form of quests combined with touring one of the most mysterious and mystical places in the region, exploring its nature and heritage, making friends through teamwork and exciting activities and having fun.

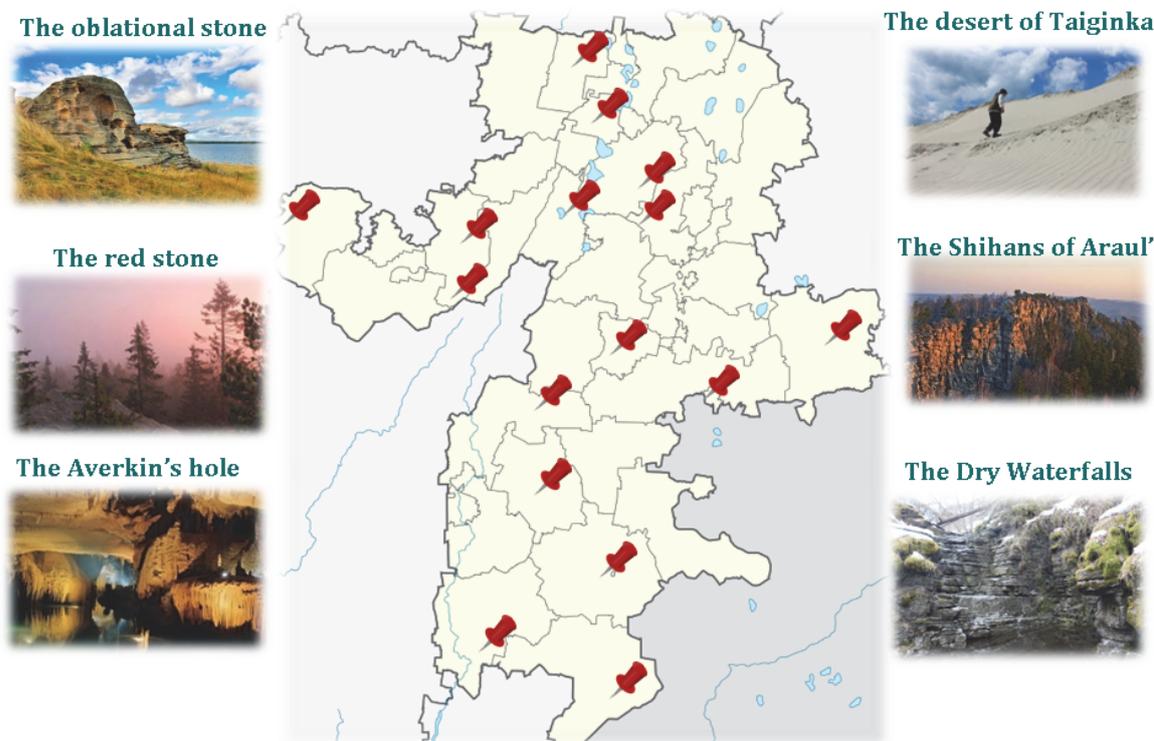
And the team intends to prepare, protect and manage heritage resources involving the residents of the nearest village Uk as active participants who create the ownership of the new heritage brand, contribute to its development and are engaged in organization and operation of the place and activities that interest and attract visitors for their enjoyment and for village residents' economic and social benefit improving their living standards and contributing to pride of their birthplace, stability and sustainability.

To make it happen and test the idea the team assessed its potential, developed a plan, investigated feasibility and viability, outlined communication and advertising strategy, prepared a pilot tour scenario and quest, made props and recruited volunteers to organize the free trial tour for organizers' friends who shared their impressions so that Sasha and Lena could learn the lessons, correct mistakes and improve the project before its launch.



Potential for Growth

The team is thinking big and plans to expand the project reaching more heritage sites off the beaten tracks in the South Urals.



On the map of the region you can see little-known regional heritage sites that the team has identified so far. As you can notice, there are many of them.

All these places are waiting to share their unique authentic resources and fascinating stories with heritage travelers.

The team is determined to continue the research and hope to collect enough data and arguments in favor of launching a new South Urals heritage route under Shaitanka brand that symbolizes preservation, protection and promotion of little-known local heritage sites in the region.

Their unique authentic stories are worth telling to residents and visitors.

Conclusion

Summing up, the team would like once again to draw attention to the project key competitive advantages:

- The team is the first in the South Urals to design the concept of an outdoor heritage tour quest that integrates two popular trends - tourism and quests
- The project will preserve and protect Shaitanka Lake nature resources because organizers will carefully look after and maintain the site and preserve its history because all authentic stories and legends will be recorded and shared with heritage visitors.
- The project is feasible and viable in terms of implementation and has a strong potential for sustainable development

- It will help rediscover and promote a local heritage site making it available and affordable
- Local people are engaged and supportive seeing opportunities for revitalization of the neighborhood through a heritage project
- The team will develop a pool of knowledge and best practices for replication and scaling of heritage tour quests of little-known heritage sites of the South Urals

Are you ready to experience a heritage tour quest of Shaitanka Lake?

References

1. The Red Book of the Chelyabinsk region
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3. <http://gorod-asha.ru/?site=encyclopedia&termin=795>
4. http://www.masterplans.ru/rukovodstvo_project_expert.html

Teacher's Note

Participation in GTTP Research Award was of great importance and benefit for my students. As their future profession is closely connected with development and implementation of different projects, they are always happy to take part in case study competitions. However, the experience gained at this competition can be hardly compared to anything else. Everything is unusual in it: from the tight deadline for development of the idea (one day only) to the duration of the competition, which lasted over 6 months.

It should be noted that I, as a teacher, am pleased to see how students have become a real team and how the project has united them. They generated ideas, conducted research and field work, surveys and interviews, visited Shaitanka Lake, talked with local people, developed and revised plans and have been gradually building their case study.

The most challenging and at the same time fascinating part of the competition was the case development, as this task greatly differed from all the rest and required not only knowledge and elaboration of the project concept but also enabled creativity. Students disputed a lot about the form to present the case and, in my opinion they managed to find a non-trivial solution. It is always interesting to take part in competitions, which do not involve routine solutions but require team individuality.

Also it was hard to choose an ideal place for heritage tourism development. There are gazillion of wonderful, mystic, full of history and just very beautiful places here, where we live, in the South Urals. But the main idea appears immediately: “We want to save little-known places from destruction in forgotten”. It runs like a golden thread through children’s work. That places, their

history, their amenities of nature, their legends can become the cultural heritage of the South Urals.

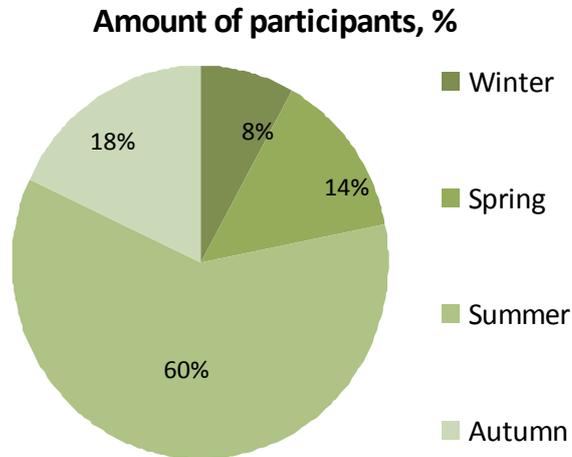
In general, I would like to say that I'm proud of my team and happy with their accomplishments. As I observed students working on the project I can say that they improved their team work, became more self-assured and learnt to cope with complicated nonstandard tasks in the shortest possible time. I do not doubt that these skills will be useful to them in their future professional life. And I will gladly advise all other students to take part in GTTP Research Award and will be happy to cooperate with organizers of this competition.

The fact that students are full of desire not to stop on the achieved and intend to continue and expand their research demonstrates significant impact of participation in GTTP Research Award. They want to apply gained experience to drawing attention more undeservedly neglected local heritage sites in the South Urals.

In addition, I think that our case can become a good practical instruction manual for classroom activities, tours organizing and application of quests, and project management in teaching/learning process. Students can find and research little-known places, visit these places and gain many of much needed and appreciated skills following the framework developed in the case.

Attachment

A project related interview was conducted with organizer of tourist events from tourist center "Cosmos" Chelyabinsk, Gilmanov R.V. Interesting results are given below:



1. Which seasons people prefer for hiking?

Conclusion: More than a half of tourists prefer summer hiking – good news for us as our quests is a seasonal business, oriented on the warm season.

2. Who attends your events?

Answer: Mainly young people, because they have free time, they are mobile and all the time they want to learn something new. Slightly smaller part consists of people from 30 to 50. In the current economy people are choosing to stay closer to home and spend less, yet they still want to travel and experience new places. Sometimes unique clients come across – recently a lady born in 1947 joined the group and successfully went through all stages of the journey!

Conclusion: Youth is our main target audience. They are in search of new experiences and impressions. We can attract them with a unique integrated approach to tourism and quests.