

Quest room industry: key characteristics and trends

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Abstract

The article gives the current state of the Latvian quest room industry. In the article are considered characteristics and main trends of development of the quest industry. In order to create a complete picture on the issues of the escape rooms business, there were carried the analysis and comparison of the quest rooms in the world. As an example, is taken the brand "Quest Lab". This topic is very relevant in our time. To maintain the interest of consumers and expand the boundaries of intellectual entertainment there is a great demand for using new techniques. There is a gradual decline in interest to some quest rooms because of the oversaturation of the escape room market. To take hold and continue its development in the entertainment industry market, it is necessary to change constantly, use new opportunities and new forms. The practical result of the research should be increase in the rating and awareness of the "Quest Lab" brand that will allow maintaining a leading position in the escape market in Latvia.

Keywords: entertainment industry, escape room, trends, social meaning, performance, quality

1 Introduction

Entertainment is one of the most important spheres of a person's everyday life, which, along with education can significantly influence the state of society. In different sources the word "entertainment" is interpreted in different ways, for example, according to Collins English Dictionary it is "something affording pleasure, diversion, or amusement, especially a performance of some kind" [2].

Quest industry is a specific niche in the entertainment industry. It contains quests in reality: escape rooms, outdoor quests, performance quest etc.

The Cambridge dictionary explains the word "quest", as "...a long search for something that is difficult to find, or an attempt to achieve something difficult..." [1].

The first documented "escape game" was SCRAP's room in Kyoto, Japan in July 2007, intended for a team of 5-6 people [6].

Following the Asian countries, the quests became confidently gaining popularity in the USA and Europe, and Budapest became the "capital" of the new kind of entertainment on the European continent.

In Latvia, the first quest games came to Riga in August 2012 and the first room was opened by the "Mysteria" company. Despite a short time of existence, the quest industry has developed rapidly.

Currently, due to the large growth of the escape industry it has come to the peak of competition.

Therefore, in order to attract new customers and stay in this entertainment market, innovative ideas and improvement of the quality of services are in great need.

This can be done both as through formation of new rooms, for example, performance quests, as the introduction of new technologies, the improvement of quality, the expansion of

activities and the use of trends in the industry [4].

2 Overview of the research object

„Quest Lab” is a young agency of organizing entertainment and recreation activities for people. It was founded in Riga in September 2014.

The main activity of entertainment and gaming centre „Quest Lab” are quest-rooms. „Quest Lab” is a quest in reality, a fascinating game for teams from 2 to 6 people. From the end of 2015 it started outdoors quests for big companies.

„Quest Lab” has a very good location in the centre of the city on the 45/47 Elizabetes Street.

Gaming centre „Quest Lab” provides two rooms to solve – «The Captain's Room» and «Experiment». A new room “Time Machine” is coming soon [5].

3 Characteristic of quest industry

Quest is an interactive game that consists of solving various puzzles and logical tasks according to the scenario. Throughout the game a storyline is traced, which in the end, depending on the choice and moves of the player should lead him to victory. The main distinction between quests from other similar entertainments is the presence of a goal. The players immediately have a task they must achieve.

The quests industry is not at a stop, it is constantly being improved. Currently, the following three most well-known areas can be distinguished. They are in constant demand among representatives of different age and social groups [6].

- Form of the „Quest room”

The principle of escaping from the room (escape the room) is by far the most popular kind in the quest for the industry. Their idea consists in escaping of the team from

the room within the allotted time - 1 hour - by solving the fragments of brainteaser. And most often the tasks presented in the quest alternate not only in terms of complexity, but also in the format of their focus. These tasks are as for logic and mindfulness, as for teamwork and dexterity, etc. There is an administrator outside the quest room tracking the progress of the game. The most popular genre of the escape rooms for the second decade of the year 2016 was such: horror, fantasy, history, science, the future of technology.

- Form of the „Performance quest”

This is a theatrical performance with actors, in which the player directly assumes the main role. Quest performance is essentially the same quest room, the players also find themselves in a locked room, but their main goal is not to solve a specific task, but rather the actual passage of the quest, immersion in its atmosphere, in a different reality. Attributes of such quests are selected visual and sound

TABLE 1 Main features of the quest-business models [5]

| | Room | Outdoor | | |
|---|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| | | Open | For individuals | Corporate |
| Start-up costs | High | | Low | Medium |
| Payback | High | | Medium | High |
| The number of games in one scenario, which can be conducted per day | Till 10 | 1 | 2-3 | 1 |
| Number of participants | 2-8 | 7-20 | 7-20 | More than 25 |
| The cost of the game for a group of participants, (euro) | 25-60 (euro/team) | 8-10 (euro/person) | 40-80 (euro/game) | From 170(euro/event) |

The chart shows that each model has its own advantages and disadvantages. Both models are in demand among customers.

At the moment, there are about 70 such rooms with different plots in Riga. Figure 1 shows overall dynamic of the development of quests in Latvia from the period from 2014 to 2016.

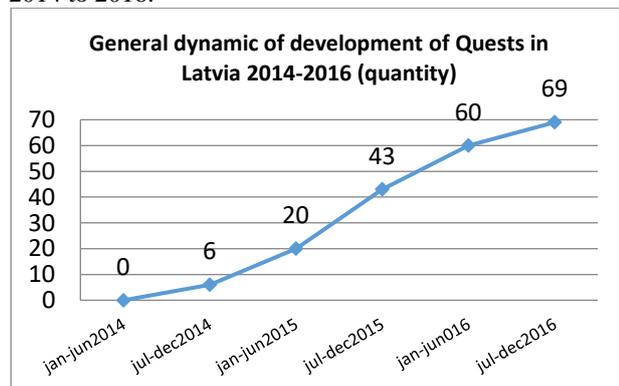


FIGURE 1 General dynamic of development of Quests in Latvia (2014 – 2016) (quantity)

Despite the fact that participation in quests is a popular type of entertainment, it is necessary to take into account the possibility of diminishing interest due to the glut of the market. Therefore, it is necessary to modify this business or to come up with new ideas for the enterprise.

3 Trends

- Integration of quests, creation of universal entertainment centres. (DisneyQuestPlanet)

effects, an authentic interior of the room, as well as a game of animators. The first and the only quest performance in Latvia is "Madness" from the company "Escaperoom". [7]

- Form of „City quest” or „outdoor quest”

These are quests for various interesting urban places. It can be older museums-manors, parks, lively and historically significant streets of the city. In contrast to the quest of rooms and quest performance, city quests take place in open spaces. We can say that this is not justly forgotten - orientation on the terrain in a new format. One of the hallmarks of urban quests is the complete absence of restrictions on the number of participants. In Latvia representatives of such quests are the company "Quest Riga".

At the moment, the most popular type of quests is the quest room. In Table 1 are shown main features of the quest-business models.

- Expansion of the "assortment" of services (nanny for the quest, master classes, organization of parties, expansion of the directions of quests, etc.)
- Certification of quests (as proof of quality)
- Globalization and enlargement of "escape" business. (Absorption and consolidation of quest companies', franchising)

Social missions:

1. charitable quests;
2. expanding of the age audience;
3. „check-up” during the Quests;
4. psychological correction;
5. projects to save historical sites;
6. educational.

4 Conclusions

Companies in the entertainment industry constantly have to solve the problem of maintaining their place in the market. This applies as well to a new kind of entertainment - the quest industry. In order to strengthen its position in the market it is necessary to move forward constantly. Companies need a competitive advantage, which gives superiority over competitors.

Quest industry, continuing its development, becomes more civilized and enlarges as an alternative to other traditional entertainment. Based on the analysis of the activities of the company "Quest Lab", it can be assumed that in order to increase competitiveness and stabilize positions in the quest industry, it is possible to apply certain types of trends - new technologies, social missions, quality certification and expansion of the "assortment" of services. The main obstacles to the implementation of such ideas are

the complexity of implementing individual components and the speed of their implementing.

As a result, usage of all mentioned above tendencies will

raise rating and recognition of the enterprise and will allow it maintaining the leading position in the market of quests in Latvia.

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