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INTRODUCTION

Digital marketing technologies and new markets: from embryonic markets to digital marketing

Introduction

The world is changing, and tourism is absorbing these new dynamics and trends. The 5th Advances in Tourism Marketing conference hosted a number of papers which enlighten these new paradigms with this special issue bringing together a number of contemporary and challenging views on the subject. Building on the successful publication history of this niche conference, the papers presented were blind peer reviewed before and after the conference with the scientific committee offering further insight during the conference held in Faro, Portugal in 2014. This issue builds consistent with the theme of the conference and the dynamics and events omnipresent across the wider tourism landscape. This special issue combines new and emergent fields of research about embryonic markets and digital marketing that are not typically assessed in the tourism literature. Furthermore, most of the papers selected for this special issue cover these topics in different national contexts and with quite different methods of analysis; from sociology to geography, this special issue represents a truly trans-disciplinary approach to the study of tourism research. Within the boundaries of a trans-disciplinary approach this special issue comprises eight papers covering an eclectic mix of academic research in the tourism marketing field. This issue also serves as a platform to launch new and emerging promising researchers from across the world. This, combined with the effort to catch embryonic or under-researched topics in tourism marketing is presented here, materializing in what we believe to be a promising, challenging, and engaging set of topics and authors in the domain of tourism marketing.

This special issue comprises eight articles in the sub-domains of new market trends and digital marketing. Most of them cover different tourism global contexts to contribute to a standardized and universal body of knowledge; others combining geographical and sociological methods contributing to enrich tourism marketing knowledge through a trans-disciplinary approach.

The first set of papers deal with new trends in tourism market. The first paper *Motivation and involvement in international tourism* by Cláudia Seabra, Carla Silva, José Luís Abrantes, Margarida Vicente, and Ram Herstein proves that tourists willing to relax are more involved with planning their trips which ultimately results in a high demanding pattern. In general, these tourists tend to be more critical with the destination, particularly with regard to infrastructure, travel information, signs, and indicators. This paper is the corollary of Pearce (2005) that states that tourism holidays started a long time before the trip and may never end.

The second paper *Retirees' tourism behaviour in Andalusia: Stability and change in the first decade of the twenty-first century* by Karina Nielsen covers one of the most emergent tendencies in tourism today, that of senior tourism. The paper contributes to the literature by introducing a cross-sectional approach that demonstrates how the retirees' behaviour changes across time. The paper concludes that stable patterns in retirees' tourism behaviour are related to life cycle factors (retirement and empty nest), whereas period effects are likely to contribute to more varied tourism patterns. The paper concludes that the retirees do follow major trends in tourism demand, but to a different degree than other tourists, as life cycle factors shape their behaviour.

In a quite different vein, the third paper *Enhancement of the "Blue Flag" eco-label in Italy: An empirical analysis* by Tonino Pencarelli, Simone Splendiani, and Claudia Fraboni suggests that tourists

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are attracted also by environments where sustainability is presented. They value the environment and recognize that the environment is the natural capital of tourism and tourists. As such, the promotion of Blue Flag beaches is of outmost importance to maintain the marketing of one of the oldest and more mature products in tourism; the sun and sand.

This first section of the special issue concludes with a review of the literature about corporate social responsibility; a theme that open paths for moral and ethical values to be included in the promotion and communication of touristic products. The fourth and final paper in this first section, *The evolution of CSR's research in tourism context: A review from 1992 to 2012* by Marina Zanfardini, Patricia Aguirre, and Lucía Tamagni, through a blended methodology of content analysis and bibliometric measures, suggests that it is the more frequent use of "responsible tourism" instead of "social responsibility" or "CSR" that predominates in studies about enterprises, suggesting that further research is needed to clarify this concept.

These remarks lead to the second theme of this special issue, digital marketing, the other side of promoting and communicating with tourists under a one-to-one relationship (Hays, Page, & Buhalis, 2012). The first paper of this second section- digital marketing- entitled "Choosing online content for tourism destination marketing: Current message strategies and positioning attributes" by Pedro Quelhas Brito and Joaquim Pratas through a comprehensive benchmark model proposes a method to promote destination brands online. The results are supported by the content analysis of 400 online brochures from across the world where creativity is the must-have of any strategy that may be adapted to consumer wills and attitudes.

The second paper of this group, **"**Social media as a communication and marketing tool in tourism: An analysis of online activities from international key player DMO**"** by Vitor Roque and Rui Raposo, explores the web 2.0 and social media applications adopted by DMOs (destination marketing organizations) worldwide to communicate with tourists. The results show that the leverage effects of this communication are quite different worldwide with the leveraging outcomes deemed to be weakest for Australian DMOs.

The third paper, "Construction of a web-based Geographical Information System: The case of "Ria de Aveiro" Region" by Helena Cláudia da Cruz Albuquerque, Filomena Maria Cardoso Pedrosa Ferreira Martins, Rui Manuel de Assunção Raposo, Luís Manuel Tomás Galiza Cardoso, Pedro Miguel dos Santos Beça Pereira, and Paulo Dias introduces the potential of geography methods to promote a tourism destination. It is assumed that the web-based GIS for Ria de Aveiro placed online, is of interest to tourists or entrepreneurs willing to promote their businesses.

The fourth and final paper, "New possibilities of GIS for mapping a mature destination: A case in Benalmádena" by Carlos Rosa-Jiménez, Sergio Reyes-Corredera, and Belén Nogueira-Bernárdez introduces the fact that GIS not only facilitates mapping but rather it introduces touristic emotions through a content analysis of opinions from TripAdvisor's website. This analysis demonstrates that this mature destination may evolve from a predominance on sun-and-beach tourism to a sun-and-water tourism destination.

In conclusion, each of the eight papers featured in this special section offers evidence of some of the emerging areas of interest to those with a passion for researching tourism marketing with senior tourism, responsible and sustainable tourism, as well as social media and networks, and geographical information systems. Each of these areas of interest is likely to remain core areas for research scrutiny long in to the future as the wider domain of study matures and attracts a greater diversity and depth of academic research studies. This special issue hopefully will serve as the catalyst for new topics in tourism marketing research. We certainly feel that they deserve your attention, so please keep reading and continue your voyage of discovery!

References

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Antonia Correia
University of Algarve & European University, Portugal
acorreia@ualg.pt

Metin Kozak
Dokuz Eylul University, Turkey
metin.kozak@deu.edu.tr

Alan Fyall
University of Central Florida, USA
Alan.Fyall@ucf.edu

Juergen Gnoth
University of Otago, New Zealand
jgnoth@business.otago.ac.nz