

# Chapter 58

## Experience Marketing and Tourism: An Application of Service–Dominant Logic to Addiopizzo Travel

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### ABSTRACT

*Tourism is acknowledged to be highly experiential in nature, but despite these characteristics, in the tourism literature there are few articles that adopt the Service-Dominant logic (S-D logic) for studying tourism experiences. The aim of this paper is to apply the S-D logic to the case of Addiopizzo Travel, a Mafia-free project of responsible tourism set up in Sicily, Italy. Results show the role of Addiopizzo Travel as a central node of the network of firms involved in the project and the role that interactions among Addiopizzo Travel, stakeholders, and visitors have in the co-creation of tourists' experience.*

### INTRODUCTION

Consumer experiences are a topic that has attracted the attention of scholars in the tourism and marketing field for a long time. Indeed, scholars in the tourism field have been studying experiences since the 1970s (Uriely, 2005; Hosany & Witham, 2010), while in the marketing field experiences and experience marketing have been studied since the 1980s (Tynan & McKechnie, 2009), when the concept was first developed in the pioneering work of Holbrook and Hirschmann (1982). Experiences have been studied in B2B and B2C (Lemke et al., 2011) and in different services such as banking (Klaus & Maklan, 2012), hospitality (Jüttner et al., 2013), tourism (Kim, et al., 2012; Klaus & Maklan, 2011) and retail (Chang & Horng, 2010). Moreover, studies have focused on different aspects such as measurement of the experience quality (Lemke et al., 2011; Chang & Horng, 2010), the antecedents of the perceived value of experiences (Prebensen et al., 2013) and the impact that other customers have on the experience (Brocato et al., 2012). Moreover, different approaches to the development of experiences have been put forward.

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For example, Pine II and Gilmore (1999) view experiences staged similarly to a theatrical play, while Schmitt (1999) stresses the need to stimulate the five senses.

Although several scholars have studied experiences, it must be acknowledged that little attention has been paid to the study of experiences in multi – stakeholder environments. On this topic, for example, Klaus and Maklan (2012) have highlighted that in literature the link between co – creation and the consumer experience is quite vague, as is the impact of social context on the consumer experience.

While looking at the literature on experiences taken from the tourism and marketing studies, it is possible to see that, while in marketing the Service-Dominant logic (S-D logic) has been applied to the study of experiences, in the tourism literature it has received little attention and just recently some attempts have been made to apply it. For instance, Shaw, Bailey, and Williams (2011) have adopted the S-D logic to the hotel industry and have focused their attention on the processes of co-creation of value with regard to innovation. However, even if the interest towards the S-D logic is increasing, it has been acknowledged that further research is needed (Li & Petrick, 2008).

Despite the lack of studies adopting the S-D logic to tourism, in literature there are some articles that stress some of the main points highlighted in the S-D logic, such as: (1) the concept of value of co-creation through which service providers and tourists are both engaged in the creation of value and they become, in this way, co-creators of value (Li & Petrick, 2008; Shaw, Bailey, & Williams, 2011); and (2) the relational nature of the exchange between, on the one hand, service providers and tourists and, on the other hand, tourists (Li & Petrick, 2008; Prebensen & Foss, 2011).

Due to the lack of studies that apply S-D logic to the field of tourism, this paper tries to fill in this gap by studying the case of *Addiopizzo Travel*, a project of responsible tourism that has been set up in Sicily, Italy. In so doing three different stages – the pre-trip, the travel, and the post-trip – have been analysed in order to assess how experiences are co-created. Special attention has been devoted to the analysis of relationships among *Addiopizzo Travel*, its network partners, and visitors.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Tourism Experiences and the S-D Logic**

Tourist experiences have been usually studied by adopting two different perspectives that refer to the social sciences and the marketing, respectively. In the latter case the tourist experience has been associated to the consumer experience since tourists are consumers, thus the tourist experiences have been analysed by adopting a consumer behaviour approach (Quan & Wang, 2004). Although different approaches have been used in the study of tourism experiences, it is acknowledged that they share some common characteristics. They are subjective because they are lived by people who can give them different meanings according to their own personal and cultural background. Moreover, tourist experiences are multi-phased because they start developing before the trip and continue evolving until the post-trip phase in which tourists recall the travel in their minds, this also means that experiences are variable over time. Finally, it is recognised that in order to develop a tourist experience it is necessary to involve both the suppliers of services and the demand (i.e. the tourists). Hence, tourist experiences cannot be shaped only by the tourism service providers, but also tourists play an active role and they can be considered, to all intents and purposes, to be co-producers of experiences (Quinlan Cutler & Carmichael, 2010; Ritchie & Hudson, 2009; Uriely, 2005). As a consequence, in this context the role of interactions

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