

Chapter 24

Digitization and Smart Tourism: Technological Opportunities for Luxury Tourism and Destination Image

Bindi Varghese

Christ University, India

ABSTRACT

Commitment to technology, sustainability, innovation, and accessibility has not only improved the quality of life but has also created a niche for luxury tourism with smart tourism eco-space. Smart tourism destinations (STD) need vigorous, well-connected stakeholders with the help of a technological platform for data exchange. Instant data exchange creates extremely large data sets known as big data. This chapter aims to contribute to the understanding on how smart tourism destinations could potentially enhance luxury tourism that is more personalized to meet visitors' unique needs and preferences. Developing smart tourism destinations can be an effective mode to engage all the stakeholders and tourists. In improving destination performance, smart tourism ecosystem applies social media analytics and smart tourism technologies. This chapter aims to relate local area as smart tourism local service systems (S-TLSS) and luxury tourism.

INTRODUCTION

Technological dependence, sustainable development, innovation and access to things, has great impact on the quality of life of their inhabitants but has also transformed the elements when it comes to travellers preferring where they want to relax. This in a crux is what Smart Tourism entails. In recent times smart tourism has gained tremendous popularity. Information and communication infrastructure capabilities improve the governance; management facilitates product innovation and advances the tourist experience. Taking into account tourism as an important and integral sector in national economies, Smart tourism provides favourable direction for the development in sustainable and luxury tourism and it also emphasises on electronic market at different strata.

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Digitization and Smart Tourism

The smart tourism as an idea emerged against the backdrop of recent developments and amalgamation of information technology that offers new models of communication, advance phase of data collection, analysis and exchange, therefore creating new ways for value creation (Pan and crotts, 2012). In the last decade we have observed tremendous growth in the field of research technologies, online travel distribution channels, virtual tourism communities and various forms of social media platforms that encourages travellers to make easy going and making smart decisions. These technologies are connected to various computerized reservation systems either directly or indirectly, which has integrated now to travel and tourism industry.

So as to comprehend the procedure of advancement from a vacationer goal into a shrewd tourism destination, it is important to exhibit the idea of ICTs. As indicated such advances are one of the prevalent entertainers for the development of a destination. Data advances are utilized from multiple points of view, with the point of improving procedures, supporting management and cultivating the creation of data based products, in this manner creating information and its dispersion to what can be named the “data and computerized society”. Taking into account the advancement of goal showcasing, these advances additionally advancement related procedures. Informal communities and different devices utilized by travellers during trips create a lot of information that can be utilized to improve the administration of a goal. Such a declaration exhibits that ICTs are more than just innovative apparatuses. They are related with the ability to create information and to the correct utilization of such information. This utilization happens in many areas inside a goal. The arrangement of devices given by ICTs is gigantic whenever contrasted with conventional methods for correspondence and data. The creation of substance about an area has developed exponentially since informal organizations rose, and this has empowered the sharing of encounters along the way. Tourists are getting progressively increasingly associated. The scattering of data about an area is just constrained by the mechanical instrument vacationers have at their disposal. Utilizing ICTs for their own dispersal and the executives, goals are uniting and turning out to be notable, a reality that follows the development of data trade innovation.

CONCEPTUALIZING LUXURY IN TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY

Luxury is the word derived from “luxus” which means gratification of senses. These days people come up with a behaviour of uniqueness where consuming a normal goods are no longer a priority. People have an experimental nature of wanting to have extra-ordinary goods and services. The uptrend visible in the luxury market can be the most meaningful example, especially in case of leisure and tourism where people seek for some different and unusual experience to visit. The transformation in the economic behaviour with giant IT revolution and industry competition tends the people to seek for differentiation (Verieeimo and Loureiro, 2012). Luxury is considered as the refined version of human needs which is different for every individual because of the human nature. The necessity to luxury is understood in a distinguished manner in various societies even if the needs are same. Luxury tourism is different from other luxury goods due to experiencing nature, comfort and leisure.

Total tourism industry consists of only three percent of luxury segment across the globe whereas, their spending comes to twenty five percent of cash flow on international travels which clearly shows the spending capacity of the luxury travellers to be much more than normal travellers. The luxury segment is not only based on pricing factors; it is basically the function of finding solutions or ideas to the

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