

Chapter 10

Digital Detox, Trends, and Segmentation in Tourism

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ABSTRACT

The chapter aims to demonstrate the growing importance of the concept of ‘digital detox’ as a segment of the tourism market to indicate the reasons and factors that encourage its demand, the diversity of establishments, the strategies employed by them, the limits, facilitating the adaptation to market conditions, and assisting in the development of marketing strategies that respond to customer needs. Through a content analysis of some research papers from the last 10 years and websites, as well as an interview with the founder from one of the establishments specialized in “disconnection with technologies” experiences, the “Offline House,” this study presents inputs on marketing (digital), tourism (niches), and consumer behavior.

INTRODUCTION

Technological evolution has introduced a new communication paradigm, as well as changing the way people relate to each other (Saprikis, 2018). The implementation of New Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) is a given in today’s society, with a constant connection to them. While digital technologies and digital devices have made our lives more convenient and efficient, they are associ-

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ated with physical, mental, and social problems. In response to this, people desire to temporarily ditch their digital devices and refrain from the always-wired world when holidaying (Jiang & Balaji, 2021). Contact with a smartphone or a computer is uninterrupted, as they are crucial tools for the development of any work activity, as well as means of communication present in the personal and daily lives of users. However, this inseparability may be of little benefit. Given this new scenario, the concept of Digital Detox emerges, which aims to provide tools that help control the consumption of technological and communication means. This is directed, primarily, to people who show any trace of addiction, concerning their mobile devices. Knowing market trends and being aware of changes in consumer needs is of fundamental importance for the creation and development of products and packages related to disconnected tourism (Pawłowska-Legwand & Matoga, 2020). We intend to demonstrate the growing importance of this new concept, indicate the reasons and factors that encourage its demand, the diversity of establishments, the strategies employed by it, the limits, facilitate adaptation to market conditions, and assist in the development of marketing strategies that respond to customer needs. This knowledge and awareness can facilitate flexible adaptation to market conditions and can help to design marketing strategies that respond to customer needs, based on available resources or service sets, and within the new context (Pawłowska-Legwand & Matoga, 2020).

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Digital Detox: its Importance in Contemporary Society

The term Digital Detox is relatively recent, first appearing in 2010 on some websites. It was formally defined in 2014 by Oxford Dictionaries as a period in which an individual disconnects from all electronic equipment, such as cell phones or computers, which presents itself as an opportunity to reduce stress or focus on social interactions, in the physical world. The concept arises from the need to intervene in the new behaviours acquired by users, who according to Konok (2016) and Bivin et al. (2013), began to show signs of anxiety and stress when separating the mobile device, having an impact on physical health and mental. Mobile phones present themselves as the most addictive, and therefore more stressful, device, and teenagers are the age group that has the highest dependency rate (Miksch & Schulz, 2018). Then there are young adults who, according with same authors, despite having a risky behaviour, are more aware of their relationship with new technologies, and the negative effects that result from them. They admit to experiencing a feeling of nervousness and anxiety when offline and recognize that there is a greater interaction with devices than that initially planned (Miksch & Schulz, 2018).

The benefits of technology make us dependent on it and the negative effects of this dependence are reflected in professional, social, and private lives of users (Miksch & Schulz, 2018). Overuse causes loss of productivity, distraction from tasks, addictive behaviour, increased levels of stress and lack of concentration. The negative effects have a professional and academic repercussion, consisting of a decrease in performance in both environments, and affect the general well-being of the user, impacting their health (especially regarding psychological disorders) (Miksch & Schulz, 2018). The overuse of communication technologies has physical and mental consequences, and a dependent user may have higher levels of stress, and signs of anxiety and depression (Miksch et. al, 2018; Syvertsen, & Enli, 2020). In this way, the exacerbated and permanent connection leads to the worsening of the feeling of loneliness and less satisfaction with life. Syvertsen et al. (2020) also warn of the loss of sense of space and the disturbance

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