


Chapter 11

Examining the Impact of Virtual Media on Event Tourism Investigating New Possibilities

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ABSTRACT

This study delves into the many ways in which virtual media has altered event tourism, revealing fresh opportunities and developments in a sector that is always adapting to new technologies. The purpose of this research is to examine the present state of virtual media in event tourism, how it affects participant involvement, and what new trends are starting to form in this field. This research uses a mixed-methods approach, including surveys and interviews with event participants and organisers. It draws upon a theoretical framework that encompasses the technology acceptance model, innovation diffusion theory, and social exchange theory. The results provide an overview of the use of virtual media in event tourism, examine its influence on audience participation, and highlight potential areas for future development.

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Following this, the authors will look at how these results compare to the literature, what they mean for the event tourism sector, and what policymakers and event planners can do to put these findings into practice.

INTRODUCTION

The landscape of tourism has undergone a profound transformation in recent years, driven by rapid advancements in technology. One significant aspect of this evolution is the increasing integration of virtual media into the realm of event tourism. Virtual media, encompassing a variety of digital platforms and technologies, has become an integral tool in shaping and enhancing the experiences of both event organizers and participants. As the boundaries between physical and virtual spaces blur, the need for a comprehensive examination of the impact of virtual media on event tourism becomes increasingly apparent.

Background

Event tourism, characterized by the hosting of events that attract participants from diverse geographical locations, has long been a cornerstone of the tourism industry. Whether it be conferences, festivals, or sports events, these gatherings not only contribute significantly to local economies but also provide unique cultural and recreational experiences. Traditionally, the success of such events has been measured by physical attendance and on-site engagement. However, the digital age has ushered in a paradigm shift, introducing new opportunities and challenges for event organizers.

Evolution of Event Tourism

Event tourism has undergone a fascinating evolution, shaped by societal changes, technological advancements, and shifting consumer preferences. Traditionally, events were local affairs, drawing attendees from nearby regions. However, as societies became more interconnected, events started transcending geographical boundaries, giving rise to the concept of event tourism. Historically, major events such as international expositions, religious pilgrimages, and cultural festivals laid the foundation for event tourism. These gatherings not only served as platforms for communal celebrations but also attracted visitors from distant locales, fostering economic and cultural exchange. The advent of transportation innovations, such as the railroad and later air travel, facilitated the movement of larger populations, making it easier for people to attend events outside their immediate vicinity. This increased

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