# Chapter 10
# Smart Tourism and Co-Creation of the Tourism Experience:
## Netnographic Possibilities and Technological Perspectives

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## ABSTRACT

*With the union of information and communication technologies, tourism is continuing a genuine transition to e-tourism. This mutation of ICT and the advent of the virtual community are constantly transforming the behavior of both producers and consumers of tourism products. While tourism companies continue to make massive use of the media, particularly social networks, to win over new customers, tourists, on the other hand, are looking to use them as a lever to actively participate in the creation of experiential value. So, to what extent does the use of social networks encourage the co-creation of the tourist experience, and how can future technologies modify tourist experiences? Through a qualitative netnographic study, the authors found that social networks actively contribute to the co-creation of tourism value, especially via the informational, interactive, and curatorial dimensions.*

# INTRODUCTION

Consumers, and tourists in particular, are increasingly connected, and demand instant and rapid information. In this sense, digital technology predominates in travel planning. By 2022, 43% of the world's travelers will be planning their trips online (Fevad, 2023). In response to this trend, tourism companies need to implement a digital strategy to steer the deployment of their business on the web. The intelligent version of their marketing must imperatively take into account the characteristics of new media, in particular social networks. Social networks are new communication tools, with their specific audiences, uses, and new communication spaces. They foster a culture of sharing and exchanging information. Since then, these new tools have attracted a great deal of interest from the media, practitioners, and researchers alike.

Social networks have emerged as powerful platforms for tourism promotion and marketing. Tourism organizations, destinations, hotels, and travel companies leverage these platforms to showcase visually appealing content, including photographs, videos, and captivating stories, to inspire potential travelers. Social media influencers and travel bloggers with large followings play a crucial role in promoting destinations and travel experiences, often through sponsored partnerships or collaborations with tourism businesses. During and after their travels, tourists actively share their experiences on social networks through posts, photos, and videos. This user-generated content not only allows travelers to document and relive their memories but also serves as a form of word-of-mouth marketing for tourism businesses and destinations. Positive experiences shared on social media can inspire others to visit the same locations, creating a ripple effect of interest and potential bookings. For tourism businesses, social networks offer a direct communication channel with customers. These platforms allow businesses to address customer concerns, gather feedback, and provide real-time customer service. By monitoring social media conversations and analyzing user preferences and behavior, tourism organizations can gain valuable insights to improve their offerings, tailor marketing strategies, and stay ahead of emerging trends in the industry.

With the digital transition, tourism is undergoing a profound transformation with e-tourism, where the virtual community is constantly converting the behavior of both producers and consumers of tourism products. Tourists can share their experiences in real-time on social media while benefiting from the experiences and opinions of other customers or users. These technologies are used throughout the stay and are likely to enhance the visitor's experience. As a result, companies in the tourism sector need to embrace these new concerns and integrate them into their commercial and production strategies, to adapt and reinvent their business model. Today's digitalization is becoming an ideal framework for realizing opportunities to co-create memorable tourism experiences, through creative collaboration between

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