

# Chapter 14

## Assessing the Impact of Digital Innovations on Tourist Decision Making and Behavior

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### ABSTRACT

*This book chapter explores the transformative impact of digital technologies on tourist behavior, highlighting how these innovations have redefined the travel experience. Digital technologies have become integral to the tourism sector, from the pre-travel phase, when tourists use online platforms for research and planning, to the on-site experience, which is improved by smartphone applications and real-time*

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*information. Specifically, user-generated material and evaluations on social media platforms have a substantial impact on both the choice to travel and the actions taken while there. New technologies like virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) are also covered in the chapter; they provide immersive experiences and new ways to interact with places. Digital technologies provide many benefits, such as personalisation, ease of use, and adaptability, but they also pose some difficulties. Concerns about data sharing and the potential negative effects of over-reliance on technology on the quality of unplanned travel experiences are on the rise. On top of that, being constantly connected might make tourists feel obligated to capture every minute of their vacation instead of just enjoying themselves. Finally, the chapter stresses the importance of striking a balance between using modern tools and keeping the real pleasures of travel alive. The tourism sector will need to change to meet these new challenges as digital technologies advance, all the while improving the quality of the trip for tourists.*

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

New technologies such as the “Internet of Things,” location-based services, AI, AR/VR, and blockchain (for definitions, see below) have made it possible to create a tourist offer that is better than before in terms of attractiveness, efficiency, inclusivity, and economic, social, and environmental sustainability (Kumar & Chithra, 2024). In order to address issues like seasonality and congestion and create better destinations, it has also enabled innovation and process rethinking (Wang, 2024).

Innovations in production, smart assets, and effective resource utilisation all contribute to a more sustainable industrial footprint, which digitalisation already has and may have an even bigger beneficial effect on the environment (Fatima et al., 2024; O. Stryzhak, 2021).

The creation of smart travel facilitation and smart destinations are two developments that have had significant effects on the industry overall (Stylos, 2019).

### **1.1. Tourist Behavior and Decision Making**

When people travel and participate in tourism-related activities, they exhibit tourist behaviour via their behaviours, choices, and preferences (Liu et al., 2015). Marketing tactics, services, and the quality of the travel experience are all impacted by how well the tourism sector understands and caters to tourist behaviour. The following are important features of tourist conduct (Gössling, 2021):

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