


Chapter 9

Blockchain and Tourism in Rural Areas: Its Potential and Implementation in the Gargano National Park

Angelo Porcaro

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0008-6196-0650>

Università degli Studi di Foggia, Italy

Giuseppe Basile

Università degli Studi di Foggia, Italy

Francesca Ranieri

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-4672-994X>

Università degli Studi di Foggia, Italy

Caterina De Lucia

Università degli Studi di Foggia, Italy

Pasquale Pazienza

Università degli Studi di Foggia, Italy

ABSTRACT

This study explores how blockchain technology can enhance tourism in rural and less developed regions, focusing on the Gargano National Park. By employing a dual-method approach of a Systematic Literature Review and a Pilot Study, the research provides both theoretical insights and practical applications of blockchain in tourism. It highlights blockchain's potential to address challenges like limited infrastructure, economic vulnerability, and the need to preserve cultural and environmental integrity. Blockchain's transparency, security, and decentralization

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3693-7929-5.ch009

can boost tourism by ensuring the authenticity and traceability of local products, fostering customer loyalty, and promoting sustainable practices. In Gargano, blockchain could improve resource management and reduce the ecological footprint of tourism, aligning with broader sustainability goals. The study suggests that adopting blockchain can give rural areas a competitive edge, attract more visitors, and ensure that tourism development is sustainable and culturally sensitive, ultimately preserving the region's heritage.

1. INTRODUCTION

Rural tourism offers a distinct alternative to urban tourism by focusing on non-urbanized areas that are characterized by low population density, agricultural landscapes, and a deep reliance on natural resources and traditional practices (Kumar & Shekhar, 2020). This form of tourism emphasizes immersion in nature, cultural authenticity, and sustainable practices, often with intentionally limited infrastructure to minimize environmental and cultural disruption (Qin, 2022). One of the key appeals of rural tourism is the opportunity for visitors to engage more deeply with the natural environment and local traditions. Activities such as hiking, agritourism, and local crafts allow travelers to experience a slower pace of life, far removed from the hustle and bustle of urban areas. However, despite its benefits, rural tourism faces significant challenges. Accessibility is a major issue, as many rural areas are difficult to reach and lack the developed tourist infrastructure that urban destinations typically offer. Moreover, the economies of rural communities can be particularly vulnerable, often relying heavily on seasonal tourism and fluctuating visitor numbers (Liu, 2019). Preserving cultural authenticity is another critical challenge. As rural tourism grows, there is a risk that local traditions may be excessively commercialized or altered to meet tourist expectations, thereby compromising the cultural integrity of host communities. To mitigate this, integrating rural tourism with the cultural industry is essential. This synergy not only enriches the tourist experience but also helps to preserve and promote local traditions in a sustainable manner, ensuring that cultural heritage remains vibrant and intact (Liu, 2019). A concrete example of rural tourism's potential can be seen in the Gargano National Park (Buongiorno & Intini, 2021). This region, with its extraordinary natural beauty and cultural richness, exemplifies how rural tourism can be leveraged to bring attention to lesser-known yet captivating areas. Technological innovations such as blockchain could play a significant role in this context, for instance, by ensuring the traceability of local products or managing resources sustainably, thus enhancing transparency and authenticity in the tourist experience. In conclusion, rural tourism offers a path to explore the world beyond traditional urban circuits, promoting a more mindful and respectful approach

26 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/blockchain-and-tourism-in-rural-areas/394085

Related Content

We Are Martinsville (WAM): Leveraging Mobile Gaming for Community Engagement and Improving Health

Mona El Khafif, Kathy Hsu Wibberly, Elgin Cleckley, Tho H. Nguyen and Marcus H. Divers (2021). *International Journal of E-Planning Research* (pp. 63-87).

www.irma-international.org/article/we-are-martinsville-wam/279271

Architectures of Motility: ICT Systems, Transport and Planning for Complex Urban Spaces

Darren J. Reed and Andrew Webster (2010). *Handbook of Research on E-Planning: ICTs for Urban Development and Monitoring* (pp. 365-387).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/architectures-motility-ict-systems-transport/43195

A Transdisciplinary Inquiry Into Sustainable Automobility Transitions: The Case of an Urban Enclave in Cape Town

Elizabeth Henshilwood, Mark Swilling and Marjorie L. Naidoo (2019). *International Journal of E-Planning Research* (pp. 13-37).

www.irma-international.org/article/a-transdisciplinary-inquiry-into-sustainable-automobility-transitions/230902

Predictive Analytics for Urban Development Using ML Technique

Swapna Sarita Swain, R. V. Raghavendra Rao, Ch. Ram Mohan Reddy, Harkirat Kaur, Meenakshianand Sampath Boopathi (2025). *Urban Mobility and Challenges of Intelligent Transportation Systems* (pp. 383-402).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/predictive-analytics-for-urban-development-using-ml-technique/375305

Engendering the City: A Participatory Approach to Gender-Responsive Planning and Urban Design in Cairo

Jiayi Jin, Kexin Huang and Mingyu Zhu (2023). *Urban Poetics and Politics in Contemporary South Asia and the Middle East* (pp. 269-290).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/engendering-the-city/317328