

PRESS RELEASE
Lugano, February 8, 2016

ENTER2016 eTourism conference and IFITT Awards

Organized by the International Federation for Information Technology and Travel & Tourism (IFITT), the ENTER2016 eTourism Conference (Bilbao, Spain, 2-5 February 2016) has offered a worldwide and unique forum for attendees from academia, industry, government, and other organizations to actively exchange, share, and challenge state-of-the-art research and industrial case studies on the application of information and communication technologies to travel and tourism.

IFITT, the leading International Organization for Information Technologies in Travel and Tourism has organized the event, which attracted about 300 participants from 39 countries, with industry and academic backgrounds.

The conference has been organized in three tracks – research, destinations, and industry. It also featured five world class keynote speakers.

IFITT is one of the leading eTourism knowledge-hubs for tourism and technology experts in industry and academia. The Federation extensively discusses and progresses the economic, consumer and organizational impacts of eTourism through events such as the ENTER conference, workshops, and IFITT-supported publications.

IFITT members include researchers and practitioners of eTourism who treasure the power of networking and global knowledge sharing for improving their competitiveness and innovation. Institutional members include organizations, companies, and research institutes active in the eTourism space.

IFITT Awards

Each year, IFITT proudly awards innovative destination marketing organizations (DMO's), and technology-savvy organizations working in the eTourism field, as well as outstanding research contributions.

In 2016 awards in nine different categories were presented during the gala dinner on Thursday, 4 February 2016.

1. IFITT Outstanding Industry Contribution Award

The Award is given to enterprises that make a significant contribution to the growth and success of technology adoption, integration, or use in the tourism industry.

Startup Enterprises:

Travel Appeal

Duetto

Locomote

Established Enterprises:

Seekda

Rome2Rio

Aliathon Holiday Village

2. IFITT Innovative Destination' Award

The Award is given to destination marketing/management organizations (DMOs) that have very successfully integrated technology.

Greek National Tourism Organisation

Visit Kent

Ticino Turismo

3. IFITT Hannes Werthner Tourism and Technology Lifetime Achievement Award

The Hannes Werthner Tourism and Technology Lifetime Achievement Award is given to an individual from academia, industry or government, who has made significant contributions to the advancement of the field/practice of tourism and technology.

The winner of 2016 award is professor Gert van der Pijl, Erasmus University Rotterdam (in memoriam).

4. IFITT Journal Paper of the Year Award

1. Zhiwei Liu and Sangwon Park (2015). "What makes a useful online review? Implication for travel product websites", *Tourism Management*, 47, 140-151.

2. Nigel L. Williams, Alessandro Inversini, Dimitrios Buhalis and Nicole Ferdinand (2015). "Community Crosstalk: An exploratory analysis of destination and festival eWOM on Twitter", *Journal of Marketing Management* (accepted).

3. Huy Quan Vu, Gang Li, Rob Law and Ben Haobin Ye (2015). "Exploring the travel behaviors of inbound tourists to Hong Kong using geotagged photos", *Tourism Management*, 46, 222-232.

5. IFITT Thesis Excellence Award

The Thesis Excellence Award awards students who successfully defended their theses in the field of tourism and technology between October 1, 2014 and September 30, 2015.

Category Master: Yao Lan, University of Queensland (Australia), for her thesis on “Identifying differences in hospitality experiences across accommodation options”

Category PhD: John Fotis, Bournemouth University (United Kingdom), for his thesis “The Use of Social Media and Its Impacts on Consumer Behaviour: The Context of Holiday Travel”

6. ENTER Conference Best Paper Award 2016

1. Iis Tussyadiah. “Strategic self-presentation in the sharing economy: Implications for host branding.”

2. Matthias Braunhofer and Francesco Ricci. “Contextual Information Elicitation in Travel Recommender Systems.”

3. Wolfgang Wörndl and Alexander Hefe. “Generating Paths Through Discovered Places-of-Interests for City Trip Planning.”

7. IFITT Best PhD Proposal Award 2016

1. Ella Cranmer, Manchester Metropolitan University (United Kingdom). “The development of a Business Model for the implementation of Augmented Reality.”

2. Katarzyna Minor, Cardiff Metropolitan University (United Kingdom). “The effects of hotels engagement with daily deal websites on employment patterns and employee wellbeing.”

3. Jang Won Moon, Clemson University (United States). “Will Uses and Gratifications Theory help us understand eTourists use of smartphones?”

8. IFITT ICT4D Scholarship

Grislayne Guedes Lopes Da Silva, University of São Paulo (Brazil)

David Karieny, Garissa University College (Kenya)

9. Best IFITTtalk of the year

IFITTtalk@Colombo – “Modern ICT for interactive Tourism Learning and Education”, organized in Colombo (Sri Lanka) in October 2015.

Next **ENTER conference** will be organized in Rome (Italy), January 24-27, 2017

www.enter2017.org

Notes for Editors

- The first ENTER conference took place in 1994 at Innsbruck, Austria
- IFITT was founded in 1997 and is one of the world's oldest eTourism non-profit organizations
- Its President is Lorenzo Cantoni, PhD, professor at the Faculty of Communication Sciences of USI – Università della Svizzera italiana (Lugano, Switzerland), General Secretary is dr. Nadzeya Kalbaska (USI Lugano, Switzerland)
- For more information please see www.ifitt.org or e-mail at ifitt@ifitt.org
- More visual info about ENTER2015 conference:
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/ifitt/sets/72157664236285126>

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