



Newsletter

Issue 14
June/July 2013



IFITT President Update June/July, 2013



This is as relevant as ever : Time is always flying when you have so much fun. In the last 6 weeks I have been in Tunisia and Costa Rica working with the World Tourism Organisation, Miami, Cyprus, Rhodes in Greece and Algarve in Portugal. Everywhere I go I meet people that are really keen to use technology to short our business problems and engage their stakeholders. Naturally I am promoting ENTER and IFITT to everybody and I am expanding IFITTs footprint globally.

Engage and get involved !

Prof Dimitrios Buhalis

Lets make ENTER 2014 in Dublin special

ENTER2014 is progressing rapidly and Wolfram will be announcing a draft programme soon. See www.enter2014.org for updates. Patrick Horan and his team at the Dublin Institute of Technology are working hard to organize a great event in Dublin.

Submit papers and case studies and engage with the conference!

ENGAGE with the team and ENTER and

Submit a research paper Call For Papers

<http://www.enter2014.org/Call-For-Papers-103.htm>

Suggest an Industry Case Study and presentation

<http://www.enter2014.org/Call-For-Industry-Cases-104.htm>

Suggest a Destination Case Study and Presentation

<http://www.enter2014.org/Call-for-Destination-Cases-105.htm>

Submit a PhD proposal on the Call For Papers

<http://www.enter2014.org/Call-for-Research-Proposals-106.htm>

Sponsor ENTER2014– Many opportunities also available

<http://www.enter2014.org/Sponsorship-Opportunities-108.htm>

Dublin will be a spectacular location for a fantastic conference!



United Nations World Tourism Organisation supports the ENTER2014 conference

I am very pleased to report that the United Nations World Tourism Organisation will be supporting ENTER2014. Following a discussion between UNWTO Secretary General Dr Taleb Rifai and IFITT President Professor Dimitrios Buhalis it was decided that UNWTO will support ENTER2014 as it recognizes the importance of technology for Tourism. UNWTO representatives will join us in Dublin whilst a closer collaboration between the two organizations is anticipated in the future.



INNOVATION FUND

Professor Wolfram Höpken, is also leading on the innovation fund. By the IFITT Innovation Fund IFITT intends to foster innovation and strengthen the strategic development of IFITT. Project proposals can be submitted at any time and IFITT will invest up to € 10.000 into innovative projects per year.

By the IFITT innovation fund, IFITT creates innovative ideas and services for its members based on the potential of the whole community, increases its awareness in developing countries and specifically in countries which are underrepresented in IFITT and ENTER and takes social responsibility. Contact ifitt@ifitt.org to request further information or submit your proposals.

IFITT ICT4D SCHOLARSHIP

IFITT ICT4D Scholarship (Information and Communication Technologies for Development) will fund young talents coming from developing/emerging countries, to provide a positive impact onto their respective communities through the application of ICT. Projects should be connected with a Master or PhD thesis, having a clear orientation to local development. The scholarship consists of an assignment of a tutor, funding of ENTER participation and free IFITT membership for one year. Please find more details at: http://www.ifitt.org/home/view/ict4d_scholarship. For further information please contact Alessandro Inversini

(ainversini@bournemouth.ac.uk).



IFITT Placement Student: Marie-Kristin Foerste

Marie is a postgraduate student at Bournemouth University, studying MSc Tourism Management and Marketing. During the welcome session for the Tourism Masters Framework in September 2012 she met IFITT President Dimitrios Buhalis who was looking for students who want to 'do great things'. Curious about what this means, Marie attended a first meeting where she was introduced into the activities of IFITT.

Since then Marie is volunteering for IFITT and responsible for several tasks, including IFITT's social media and PR activities. She was also involved in the organisation and realisation of ENTER 2013 where she was the media manager and responsible for live social media updates.

Recently, IFITT has decided to turn Marie's assistance work into a 10-months placement, which she needs to do in order to complete her Masters degree. Since May 2013 she is, therefore, working full-time for IFITT as a marketing officer, taking care of the marketing and administration management of IFITT. During her placement she will:

- Develop a marketing and membership strategy
- Suggest guidelines for corporate identity
- Evaluate the success of IFITT's promotional efforts by producing progress reports on a monthly basis
- Find ways for improvement
- Manage IFITT's social media
- Be responsible for a range of administrative tasks such as checking emails, answering member enquiries and maintaining IFITT's membership base.

Over the year Marie will also try to enlarge the list of media contacts and develop an overall manual for the marketing and administration management of IFITT and the ENTER Conferences, which can be passed on to future IFITT members. So far Marie has made significant progress in driving IFITT's engagement on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Blogger forward with sharp rises in total reach, number of followers and fans and conversion rates.

Please feel free to communicate with Marie for opportunities to promote ENTER and IFITT through the email: enter@ifitt.org.

IFITT Recent Events

June 2013

IFITT Greece Session at Social Media World 2013

On Wednesday, June 19, 2013 IFITT Greece was hosting a session on 'Social Media in Tourism' at the Social Media World 2013 Conference, which took place in the Divani Caravel Hotel in Athens, Greece. The conference was addressed at professionals and businesses in Greece who accept, provide, utilize or think of utilizing tools and techniques of social media in all aspects of the industry.

Speakers were, among others, Professor Dimitrios Buhalis from Bournemouth University, Dimitra Arida from Melia Athens Sales and Antonis Maniatis from Costa Navarino. Topics included 'Social is personal (meet the people, meet the market)!', 'Technology and Big «Social» Data', 'Social media beyond day-to-day business' and 'Social media beyond day-to-day business'.

Overall the event was a great success that has provided its participants with new insights into the trends that prevail in the market and with an outlook of social media in Greece for products and services as well with new ideas and great impressions from a number of best practice case studies.



July 2013

***For the first time ever IFITT organised the Doctoral Summer School:
Vision of eTourism @ Bournemouth University, July, 8th-9th 2013***



The first IFITT Doctoral Summer School was a great success with more than 40 participants from all over the world. The event was aimed at providing young researchers at early stages with the opportunity to discuss their research topics and receive useful advice from experienced researchers.

The sessions included a keynote presentation by Niall Winters from the University of London about 'The role of mobiles in supporting educational tourism' and a number of presentations about the PhD life and research methodologies given by experienced researchers like Brigitte Stangl, Dimitrios Buhalis, Andrew Frew, Rodolfo Baggio, Janet Dickinson and Hania Janta.

The main highlights of the event were a dynamic 'Researcher Speed-Dating' on Day 1 (July 8) where participants could introduce themselves to each other in a given time, which was not only a fun activity but also provided the participants with a great opportunity to explore opportunities for collaboration as well as a round table session on Day 2 (July 9) where editors from famous academic journals like Alan Fyall (Journal of Destination Marketing and Management), John Fletcher (International Journal of Tourism Research) and Rodolfo Baggio (Current Issues in Tourism – Letters) shared useful insights and suggestions about publishing research papers.

A core element of the workshop was the student paper presentations. In this session the students had the possibility to present abstracts of their current research and share their thoughts and initial results with peers and experienced researchers and receive useful advice for improvement. A collection of these abstracts can be found in the proceedings of the IFITT Doctoral Summer School at: http://ifitt.org/public/uploads/IFITT_DSS2013_Proceedings.pdf. All presentations of the students and speakers are uploaded at: http://ifitt.org/home/view/summer_school.

All pictures of the summer school can be found at the IFITT Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/ifittorg>) and on Flickr (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/ifitt/>).

IFITT Upcoming Events

October 2013

IFITT is organizing a MINI-TRACK at the 3rd International Conference on Tourism Management and Tourism Related Issues

ROLE OF ELEARNING APPLICATIONS WITHIN THE TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY SECTOR

(http://www.eiasm.org/frontoffice/event_announcement.asp?event_id=960#3301)

Barcelona, Spain October 3-4, 2013

NOVEMBER 2013

IFITT will be running another event at WTM Technology enabling Travel organised by IFITT IFITT@ World Travel Market 2013 <http://www.wtmlondon.com/>

Monday 4th November 2013 from 11.00 to 13.00 ExCel London
Pencil the event and stay tuned for more information

MEMBERSHIP

With our systems in place we are now ready to have a major push and drive membership. We have clarified the Corporate and Discounted Corporate prices and benefits too. One of the major benefits is our ability to reinforce our corporate members <http://www.ifitt.org/home/view/corporate-members>. Please renew your membership as your current membership if you have not done so far and benefit from the exclusive benefits of accessing the ENTER research paper proceedings electronically, accessing the presentations of ENTER and many others. Please use our online system and report back if you experience any difficulties.

NEW IDEAS:

We are very open to new ideas and suggestions for IFITT activities, things that you feel that IFITT should be doing. Please send me an email with initiatives that you would like IFITT to take in the future.

Yours Truly
Professor Dimitrios Buhalis
IFITT President July 2013

Student Self Presentations (edited by Ulrike Gretzel)

Nicolas Gregori



I am a PhD student from Bournemouth University (UK) and my research focuses on social media and strategic service marketing. Throughout my studies I have lived, worked and/or studied in Germany, Spain, UK and Venezuela. After graduating with a Bachelor in business administration and tourism management from the International School of Management, Dortmund (GER) I was awarded a Master in Tourism Marketing (Distinction) from Oxford Brookes University with a master thesis that developed a model of determinants of consumer trust in tourism affiliate websites, by using a mixed methods approach. I am working now under the supervision of Prof. Dimitrios Buhalis and Dr. Miguel Moital at the eTourism Lab at Bournemouth University, where I received a fully funded scholarship. In my current PhD study I am primarily using qualitative research instruments to investigate how real-time enabled social media

impacts upon the strategic marketing and management practices of tourism and hospitality firms. Throughout my studies and prior to starting my PhD I had the opportunity to gain different practical insights into the tourism industry. These ranged from practical “hands-on” jobs such as guiding bicycle tours through Spain, more serious jobs such as conducting market research and consultancy projects for a major tourism consultancy in Berlin, and working on several freelance projects.

I have been introduced to the IFITT community by my supervisor in 2010 and attended and presented at the past three ENTER conferences. For the past two years and a half years I have been working as a secretary for IFITT, with my main duties involving day-to-day handling of enquiries, memberships, maintenance of the IFITT database and developing a range of marketing materials. I have co-organised the IFITT@EyeForTravel event and the IFITT@WTM workshop in 2011 and I am involved in organising the IFITT Doctoral Summer School in July 2013.

Nicolas Gregori
Bournemouth University
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Pauline Milwood: Tourism Innovation Networks: A Network Science Approach to Understanding How DMOs Organize for Innovation



I am a Jamaican Fulbright scholar entering my 3rd year in Temple University's Ph.D. in Business Administration program at the School of Tourism and Hospitality Management. My research interests focus on the study of tourism innovation networks, and include the use of network theory and analysis to understand how destination management organizations (DMOs), along with their tourism and tourism-related destination partners develop, use and share knowledge for creating innovation outcomes. I have previously worked under the supervision of Drs. Florian Zach and Daniel Fesenmaier, co-authoring papers on the

adoption and use of social media by DMOs for innovation; absorptive capacity and innovation performance. Contemporary tourism studies have pointed to the importance of innovation for destination competitiveness and survival. It has been further suggested that the extent to which a destination is able to derive value from innovation, rests not with any single actor (individual or organization), but within the *network of relationships* among actors within the destination. Central to these arguments is the role of the DMO in orchestrating such innovations, based on the DMO's position to influence and ability to control the exchange of resources among network actors. It is upon these and other foundational approaches to systems and social exchange theories that I posit my use of network science to study the relationships between DMOs and their partners within a tourism innovation network. Currently, I am pursuing research with North-American DMOs to understand how corporate governance structures, and in particular the influence of board ties, on innovation process and performance outcomes. My tertiary-level academic sojourn began with the attainment of my B.Sc. degree in Hotel Management (1998); and Executive MBA (2011) at The University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona, Jamaica. During this time (1998-2011) I held various positions in Jamaica's hospitality and tourism industry, including General Manager for the first Wendy's restaurant in Jamaica (1998-2003); Hospitality Manager at the UWI Mona Visitors' Lodge & Conference Center (2003-2011); and co-anchor and tourism segment host for the news magazine program Live@7 (2010-2011). Upon completion of my EMBA, and with the encouragement of my professors and family-members, I successfully applied for a Fulbright Scholarship which allowed me the tremendous opportunity to enroll in Temple's Ph.D. (Business Administration/Tourism) Program. The motivation to pursue further studies stemmed from the desire to develop 'further than surface-deep' insight into the business, science and practice tourism, being one of Jamaica's key economic pillars. Notwithstanding my passion for research, I enjoy reading, Zumba, experimenting with exotic dishes, listening to jazz music and choral singing.

Pauline Milwood
Ph.D. Student

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pauline.milwood@temple.edu

What's New In Journals (edited by Ulrike Gretzel)

Title: Determinants of online booking loyalties for the purchasing of airline tickets

Authors: Josep Llach, Frederic Marimon, Maria del Mar Alonso-Almeida, Merce Bernardo

Journal: *Tourism Management*, 35 (1), 23-31.



Determinants of online booking loyalties for the purchasing of airline tickets

José Llach^{a,*}, Frederic Marimon^a, María del Mar Alonso-Almeida^a, Merce Bernardo^a

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims to understand the impact of e-quality on consumer's loyalty in the context of the online airplane ticket purchase. For this purpose, quality is divided in two dimensions: functional quality (based on E-S-QUAL model) and hedonic quality. The methodology applied was administered to 617 consumers of online airplane tickets via an airline's website in 2009. Structural Equation Modeling was applied to study the impact. The results show that the functional and hedonic quality are positive significant for loyalty through perceived value. From a managerial perspective, this paper provides advice for the airline industry in the development of e-commerce to take advantage of the current situation of disintermediation and to achieve the loyalty of customers.

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Title: Generation Y travelers' commitment to online social network websites

Author: Khaldoon "Khal" Nusair, Anil Bilgihan, Fevzi Okumus, Cihan Cobanoglu.

Journal: *Tourism Management*, 35(1), 13-22.



Generation Y travelers' commitment to online social network websites

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This study aims to develop a theory-based model of relationship commitment in an online social network (OSN) context for Generation Y travelers. An online questionnaire was sent to a systematic random sample of 12,000 students at six U.S. universities. A total of 513 respondents participated in the study. Study results suggest that perceived utility and trust are positively related to both affective and calculative commitment. In terms of the relationship between perceived risk and commitment dimensions, the lower the risk associated with OSNs, the more likely customers are to continue the relationship. This study highlights the pivotal role of affective commitment in developing loyalty to travel-related OSNs.

Title: Predicting the intention to use consumer-generated media for travel planning
 Authors: Julian K. Ayeh, Norman Au, Rob Law
 Journal: *Tourism Management*, 35 (1), 132-143.



Despite the growing enthusiasm about social media, empirical research findings suggest that the majority of Internet users are not using consumer-generated media (CGM) for travel planning. Yet little is presently known about the relevant factors determining CGM usage for the specific purpose of travel planning. Using an online survey of travel consumers, this study investigates the intention to use consumer-generated media for travel planning by introducing new factors into the conventional TAM and using a partial least squares' estimation. Findings shed light on the differences in terms of the antecedents in this context. While the study demonstrates the theoretical validity and the empirical applicability of the TAM model to the context of CGM usage for travel planning, it goes further to verify the significant roles of distinctive factors like travelers' perceptions of similarity of interest, trustworthiness and enjoyment. Several managerial and research implications emerge.

Title: Mitigating Theme Park Crowding with Incentives and Information on Mobile Devices
 Authors: Amber Brown, Jacqueline Kappes, and Joe Marks
 Journal: *Journal of Travel Research*, 52(4), 426-436.



Long wait times for rides and restaurants are major sources of visitor dissatisfaction with theme and amusement parks. Crowding is often worse than it needs to be because park visitors distribute themselves unevenly. In this paper, we discuss a novel method of routing visitors to less crowded areas by offering them well-timed incentives and information on mobile devices. Two large field studies ($n = 910$ and $n = 1,370$) were conducted to test how receptive visitors were to altering their paths in response to incentives and information. The results indicate that a system such as ours can mitigate suboptimal crowd distribution in real time in a typical theme park environment.

Title: "Do We Believe in TripAdvisor?" Examining Credibility Perceptions and Online Travelers' Attitude toward Using User-Generated Content

Authors: Julian K. Ayeh, Norman Au, Rob Law

Journal: Journal of Travel Research, 52(4), 437-452.



Recent press reports and complaints by hoteliers have called into question the credibility of travel-related user-generated content (UGC). Yet our understanding of the role of credibility perceptions in the context of UGC is limited, notwithstanding the rising interest in social media. Using an online survey of 661 travel consumers, this study applies the component-based structural equation modeling technique of partial least squares to examine online travelers' perceptions of the credibility of UGC sources and how these perceptions influence attitudes and intentions toward UGC utilization in the travel planning process. The model also draws on the theory of homophily to make predictions about the antecedent of credibility. Results validate the Source Credibility Theory

in the context of UGC but also accentuate the central mediating role of attitude. In addition, the study finds support for perceptual homophily as a critical determinant of both credibility and attitude. Theoretical and managerial implications are highlighted.

Title: Factors Influencing the Usability of Mobile Destination Management Organization Websites

Authors: Jason L. Stienmetz, Stuart E. Levy, Soyoung Boo

Journal: Journal of Travel Research, 52(4), 453-464.



Mobile devices, such as smartphones, are fast becoming the primary way for many travelers to access the Internet in search of travel-related information. While mobile devices provide travelers with ubiquitous access to the Internet, they also face limitations, such as small screens and slow loading times, which destination management organizations (DMOs) must consider when designing mobile websites. This study investigates the factors influencing the overall usability of mobile DMO websites. Based on a sample of U.S. travelers with mobile devices, findings indicate that design elements related to Ease of Use and Content contribute most significantly to the overall usability of mobile DMO websites. Also, travelers highly value mobile DMO websites that are well structured and organized, offer convenient services, and have an easy-to-understand appearance. Managerial implications and areas for further research are discussed.

Title: Curvilinear Effects of User-Generated Content on Hotels' Market Share: A Dynamic Panel-Data Analysis
 Authors: Philippe Duverger
 Journal: Journal of Travel Research, 52(4), 465-478.



The present study is designed to expand the current literature in the effects of User-Generated Content (UGC) on firm performance, specifically to delineate the unique effects of the UGC components on market share results using a dynamic generalized method of moments (GMM) model. A longitudinal panel-data sample of 138 hotel reviews and ratings, along with monthly market share and several control variables is used for the empirical modeling. Overall, the analysis reveals that UGC has a positive impact on market share. A curvilinear mechanism explains the relationship between ratings and market share, discouraging lower-tiered firms from seeking a high rating. Moderating factors were also found to diminish the impact of a review length on market share. Theoretical explanations and managerial suggestions are offered in the discussion section.

Industry News (edited by Rosanna Leung)

Review and Forecast

[Visa data shows a steady stream of global travel spend in 2012](#), this report shows a detail tourists' spending and travel pattern around the world. The third-annual [Digital IQ Index®](#):

Hotels report benchmarks the digital competence of 57 Hotel brands on more than 675 data points across four dimensions: Site, Digital Marketing, Social Media, and Mobile. [A Statistical Analysis of the Social Media Impact of American Airlines' Rebranding](#) examined how well they're doing on social media by including in-depth insights into numerous metrics as well as information on what kind of content "works" and how competitors are faring. As social media plays an important role, Hotel should understand the new [Facebook Graph Search in frame and five ways to prepare](#) for the new travel planning phases.

Hotels

Many customers expecting more technological experiences inside the hotel, so what is [the 'Smart' Trend in Hotels?](#) Will [digital check-in enhances guest satisfaction?](#) The first user generate content site has been in the market for a decade and has shown us the power of peer recommendations. But are the hotels [responding to Reviews: Lessons from a Decade of Responses](#). Many hotels want to generate additional revenue, now Google has introduced a new concept: [The Next Big Hotel Online Revenue Driver is Here: Google Hotel Price Ads \(HPA\)](#).

Airlines and Airports

Technology helps piloting, now [Pilotless flight trialled in UK shared airspace](#); when will it be commercialized? Social media plays an important role in airline industry. Interesting, [Facebook CAN help sell planes! How a creative Airbus sales team brings the realities of the connected traveler to life](#). Not only airline, airports also make use of social media. [How Dublin Airport is re-thinking PR and marketing with social media?](#) [How London Gatwick Airport uses social media to connect with passengers at the airport?](#)

Destination

Google Street view enables tourists to have virtual experience before they travel and now it also enable disaster victims to see their beloved home town: [Imagery on Google Maps of Fukushima Exclusion Zone Town Namie-machi](#). One of the hot topics in town these days are [Google Glass – the Next Big Thing in the travel industry?](#) Tourists now become the destination ambassadors; [Tourism Australia reveals the secrets of its Facebook dominance](#) sharing their story how to form the world biggest social media team.

To obtain more e-tourism industry news, please download our bi-weekly IFITT junction from: http://www.ifitt.org/home/view/ifitt_junctions

IFITT Newsletter

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Engage with the IFITT Newsletter!

Submit an Article for the next Newsletter to ifitt@ifitt.org
Submit events to ifitt@ifitt.org

