

PRESS RELEASE
Lugano, February 1, 2017

ENTER2017 eTourism Conference and IFITT Awards

Organized by the International Federation for Information Technology and Travel & Tourism (IFITT), the ENTER2017 eTourism Conference (Rome, Italy, 23-27 January 2017) 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.

The 24th edition of the ENTER Conference has been hosted by Roma Tre University, and has attracted 300+ delegates from 39 countries, both with industry/destination as well as with academic backgrounds.

The Conference has been organized in three tracks – research, destinations, and industry. It has also featured world-class keynote speakers, from internationally renowned universities, from major companies – Club Med, Carlson Wagonlit Travel, Expedia, Booking, and Amadeus – along with the representatives of innovative tourism destinations.

ENTER2017 has also featured an Italian Day, with representative from industry, academia, and national authorities and policy makers. Among them, Silvia Costa, from the EU Parliament, member of the Committee on Culture and Education.

The local organizer, Symposia S.r.L, made perfect arrangements for the local logistics in Rome, secured best spots for social events, including Palazzo Brancaccio for the gala dinner, and San Paolo Fuori Mura church, as a location of the welcome reception. Furthermore, they have organized the event in a sustainable way (e.g.: collecting left overs of food and redirecting it to those in need).

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. In 2017, IFITT is celebrating its 20ies anniversary.

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.

ENTER2017 Conference Chairs

Overall Chairs:

Chair: Oriol Miralbell, CETT, University of Barcelona, Spain

Co-chair: Iis P. Tussyadiah, Washington State University Vancouver, USA

Research Track Chairs:

Roland Schegg, HES-SO Valais-Wallis, Switzerland

Brigitte Stangl, University of Surrey, United Kingdom

Industry Track Chair:

Jean-Claude Morand, Cyberstrat.net, France

Destination Track Chair:

Eduardo Santander, European Travel Commission, Belgium

PhD Workshop Chairs:

Chair: Nadzeya Kalbaska, USI – Università della Svizzera italiana, Switzerland

Co-chair: Jing Ge, University of Queensland, Australia

Co-chair: Jamie Murphy, Australian School of Management, Australia

Co-chair: Marianna Sigala, University of South Australia, Australia

IFITT Awards Director:

Phil Xiang, Pamplin College of Business, Virginia Tech, USA

Local Organizing Committee:

Marinella Rocca Longo, Università Roma Tre, Italy

Lidia Marongiu, Studio Giaccardi & Associati, Italy

Patrizia Pasolini, Symposia S.r.L., Italy

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 most established 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
- Next **ENTER eTourism conference** will be organized in Jönköping (Sweden), January 23-26, 2018 www.enter2018.org

International Federation for Information Technologies and Travel & Tourism
ifitt@ifitt.org | www.ifitt.org

IFITT Awards

Each year, IFITT proudly awards innovative technology-savvy organizations working in the eTourism field, as well as outstanding research contributions.

In 2017 awards in eight different categories were presented during the gala dinner on Tuesday, 24 January 2017.

1. IFITT Outstanding Industry Contribution Award (startup enterprises)

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.

The winners of the award in 2017 are:

eRoom

Hoxell

BookEasy

2. 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 2017 award is professor Rodolfo Baggio, Bocconi University (Italy).

3. IFITT Journal Paper of the Year Award

1. Van der Rest, J.I., Cordella, P., Loosschilder, G., & Schwartz, Z. (2016). Connecting Search Marketing to Revenue Management: conjoint analysis as a methodology to evaluate the optimal OTA commission fee. *Service Science*, 8(2), 1-15. doi: 10.1287/serv.2016.0137.

2. Kärle, E., & Fensel, A. (2016). Multi-platform mobile service creation: increasing brand touch-points for hotels. *Journal of Mobile Multimedia*, 12(1&2), pp. 091-109.

3. Fang, B., Ye, Q., Kucukusta, D., & Law, R. (2016). Analysis of the perceived value of online tourism reviews: influence of readability and reviewer characteristics. *Tourism Management*, 52, 498-506.

4. 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, 2015 and September 30, 2016.

Category Master thesis: Ioanna Samakovlis, Bournemouth University (UK), for her thesis "Making the Reality of the Marginalised Visible - How tourism development interventions can utilise social media".

Category PhD thesis: Jing Ge, University of Queensland (Australia), for her thesis "The Use of Humour for Customer Engagement on Chinese Social Media - A Rhetorical Perspective".

5. ENTER Conference Best Paper Award 2017

1. Zheng Xiang, Qianzhou Du, Yufeng Ma and Weiguo Fan. "Assessing Reliability of Social Media Data: Lessons from Mining TripAdvisor Hotel Reviews."
2. Baggio Rodolfo and Miriam Scaglione. "Strategic Visitor Flows (SVF) analysis using mobile data."
3. Sangwon Park and Jason Chen. "Spill-over Effects of Online Consumer Reviews in the Hotel Industry."

6. IFITT Best PhD Proposal Award 2017

1. Miha Bratec, University of Ljubljana (Slovenia). "Exploring Daily Deals as a distribution channel and potential driver of hotel performance: Evidence from Central Europe."
2. Jingjing Lin, Università della Svizzera italiana (Switzerland). "Innovation-Decision Process of Hospitality and Tourism MOOCs: Conversations with Instructors."
3. Zohreh Zara Zarezadeh, University of Queensland (Australia). "Revisiting Travel Information Search Strategy."

7. IFITT ICT4D Scholarship

Daniel Beyene, Addis Ababa University (Ethiopia)

Mariana Brandao, Brazilian School of Public and Business Administration (EBAPE) (Brazil)

8. Best IFITTtalk of the year

Best IFITTtalks of the year are:

IFITTtalk@Adelaide (Australia) – "Big data & Customer Engagement in Tourism" organized by Prof. Prof Marianna Sigala (Centre for Tourism and Leisure Management, School of Management, University of South Australia).

IFITTtalk@SantaCatarina (Brazil) - "Seminar in Technology Innovation on Tourism" organized by Dr. Alexandre Biz, Director of TURITEC Lab (Federal University of Paraná), and Dr. Luiz Mendes-Filho (Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte).