International Journal of Tourism Cities

Special Issue on the Application of Smart Tourism to Cities

Theme

One of the most far-reaching changes to society in the 21st century is the proliferation of information and communication technologies (ICTs). The technological advancements of the past years have not only had a great impact on society, business and people in everyday contexts but also particularly in relation to tourism (Koo et al., 2015). “Smart” has become a new buzzword to describe technological, economic and social developments fuelled by technologies that rely on sensors, big data, open data, new ways of connectivity and exchange of information. It is not so much the individual technological advances but rather the interconnection, synchronization and concerted use of different technologies that constitutes smartness (Gretzel et al., 2015a).

The term has been added to cities (smart city) to describe efforts aimed at using technologies innovatively to achieve resource optimization, effective and fair governance, sustainability and quality of life (Gretzel et al., 2015b). In connection with physical infrastructure (e.g. smart home, smart factory), the focus is on blurring the lines between the physical and the digital and on fostering technology integration (Hunter et al., 2015). In the context of tourism, smart technologies are changing consumer experiences and are generating creative tourism business models. Cloud computing, big data, mobile apps, location based services, virtual reality, augmented reality, and SNSs are all cutting-edge examples of smart technologies enhancing the tourism experiences and services (Wang et al., 2012). As a result we witness the dawn of an age of smart tourism.

On one hand, smart tourism refers to smart destinations (Buhalis and Amaranggana, 2014), which are special cases of smart cities: they apply smart city principles to urban or rural areas and not only consider residents but also tourists in their efforts to support mobility, resource availability and allocation, sustainability and quality of life/visits. On the other hand, it involves smart tourism experiences. Tourists now can better communicate and interact with and in cities to establish closer relationships with not only residents but also local businesses and city attractions. In addition, smart tourism refers to a new smart tourism economy. Consequently, smart tourism supports city development and services in a number of different ways. Constant innovation in applications of hardware, software, and network developments
means that the smart tourism city can respond efficiently and effectively to tourism needs and will be able to outperform competitors and maintain long-term prosperity.

Despite the fact that the application of smart tourism to cities is becoming increasingly prominent, it has not been well documented, conceptualized, critically analyzed and discussed. Therefore, this special issue attempts to identify relevant concepts and practices resulting from the “Application of Smart Tourism to Cities” in recognition of smart tourism being a new driving force for innovation, creativity and competitiveness in tourist cities.

Topics

The special issue’s particular interest lies on papers that focus on (1) People: smart tourists and their perceptions, behaviors, interactions and mobilities in urban contexts; (2) Cities: smart tourist city/destination development, management, and marketing; and, (3) Business applications: products, devices, process innovations and new models for value (co-)creation. From a tourism perspective, understanding the changes in travelers’ attitudes/behaviors and their interactions with intelligent systems, host communities, and travel businesses in smart tourism cities can provide both theoretical and practical implications for the tourism industry. However, this special issue also calls for more critical and philosophical perspectives on the premises and limits of smart tourism applied to cities.

Possible topics of papers may include (but they are not limited):

- Implications of smart tourism for tourism planning
- Opportunities and challenges for obtaining tourism-related statistics
- Impacts on the tourism experience, privacy concerns, tourist decision-making
- Smart tourism marketing
- Case studies of smart tourism destinations
- Big data, open data and cloud computing for smart cities
- IT architectures and models for smart city tourism (e.g., e-tourism and smart services)
- Smart tourism business models
- Privacy and security issues in smart city tourism infrastructures
- Policy, strategy, management of smart city tourism
- Value chain analysis in the networked smart city tourism industry
- Theoretical and methodological development needed to understand smart tourism related phenomena
- Smart mobilities
- Digital divide issues
Surveillance, sousveillance and soveillance in the context of smart tourism cities
Economic, environmental and social sustainability of smart city tourism

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Guest Editors

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Ulrike Gretzel is a Professor of Tourism in the UQ Business School, University of Queensland, Australia and a member of the Smart Tourism Research Centre at Kyung Hee University, South Korea. She received her PhD in Communications from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Her research focusses on technology use in tourism, with an emphasis on social media, both from organizational as well as consumer perspectives, and the design and adoption of intelligent systems, in particular recommender systems. Her research has been published in major tourism and eCommerce journals. She has also co-authored and co-edited several books related to technology in tourism.

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Lina Zhong graduated from Peking University with a Ph.D. in Human Geography. She now is an assistant professor and acting as the Director of the department of E-tourism and marketing at the School of Tourism Management in Beijing International Studies University. Her main research area is destination planning and marketing with a particular focus on big data and online analysis. She was educated both in China and Hong Kong and has extensive research and consultancy experiences in such areas. Having been involved in over 40 projects on regional and tourism planning in China, such as the Great Wall and Hangzhou City, Lina Zhong is proficient in regional tourism planning and recreational design. Lina Zhong has also written extensively on tourism planning and management in first-tier academic journals.

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References


